Hafa Adai!

Former CUC board chair Manglona is re-nominated. PAGE 3

CNMI military affairs bureau launches its official website. PAGE 7

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Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXXII, Issue No. 242
TUESDAY DECEMBER 6, 2022
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CHRISTMAS IN THE MARIANAS
People check out the different sculptures and installations on display at the Christmas in the Marianas event at the Garapan Fishing Base during the kickoff celebration last Friday, Dec. 2, 2022. KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
Story and more photos on Page 6

OAG offers Torres plea deal

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres leaves the courtroom after a status conference yesterday before Superior Court judge pro temp Alberto Tolentino at the Guma Hustisia. KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of the Attorney General has proposed a plea agreement in the criminal suit filed by Attorney General Edward Manibusan against Gov. Ralph DLG Torres for alleged misconduct in office and theft.

During a status conference yesterday before Superior Court judge pro temp Alberto Tolentino, the OAG, through Chief Solicitor Robert Glass Jr., informed the court that it has offered Torres a plea agreement with a deadline to respond by Dec. 30.

"We have offered a plea

See OAG on Page 4

DPS bats for autopsy on body found in CK

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The body that was found in an advanced stage of decomposition deep in a vacant lot in Chalan Kanoa is currently awaiting an autopsy to determine whether foul play was involved in the man's death or if he died of natural causes.

According to Department

See DPS on Page 4

Castro submits response; asks for another extension

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' chief of staff, William Castro, has reportedly asked for more time to produce documents related to the administration's Building Optimism, Opportuni-

See CASTRO on Page 4

INSIDE

ASIA
The highest volcano on Indonesia's most densely populated island, Mount Semeru, has erupted.
PAGE 13

OVERDRIVE
The Acura NSX is galloping off into the sunset in style. For its last model year, the NSX gets a Type S model.
PAGE 14

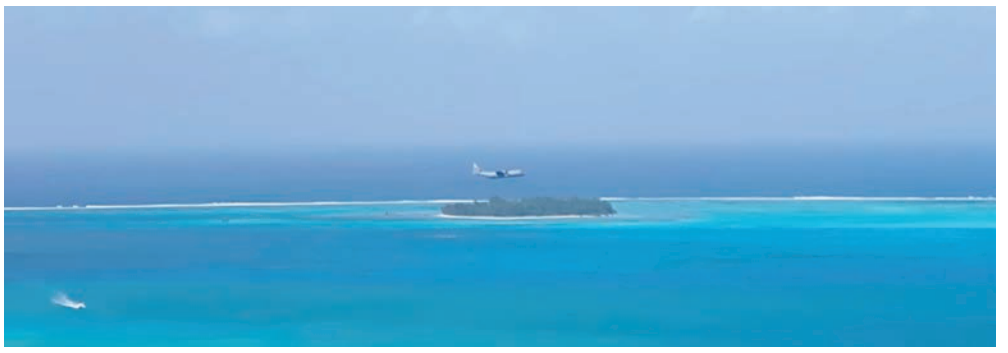
LIFE & STYLE
Infowars host Alex Jones filed for personal bankruptcy protection Friday in Texas.
PAGE 15

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

PRACTICE RUN U.S. AIR FORCE/YASUO OSAKABE

Right to left, U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Benjamin Pall and Airman 1st Class Riley Henagar, both 36th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-130J loadmasters, confirm a location route over the Northern Mariana Islands, Dec. 1, 2022, during Operation Christmas Drop 2022. Yokota's C-130J crew members practice skills that enable effective dynamic delivery in support of future operations.



Yokota's C-130J makes practice drop runs on Managaha Island. MARK FARMER

Left to right, U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Benjamin Pall and Airman 1st Class Riley Henagar, both with the 36th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-130J loadmasters, conduct a simulated dynamic airdrop delivery over Tinian, Dec. 1, 2022, during Operation Christmas Drop 2022.

U.S. AIR FORCE/YASUO OSAKABE

Left to right, U.S. Air Force Capt. Maddie Atkinson and Capt. Eichard Armfield, both with the 36th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-130J pilot, fly over Saipan, Dec. 1, 2022, during Operation Christmas Drop 2022. U.S. AIR FORCE/YASUO OSAKABE

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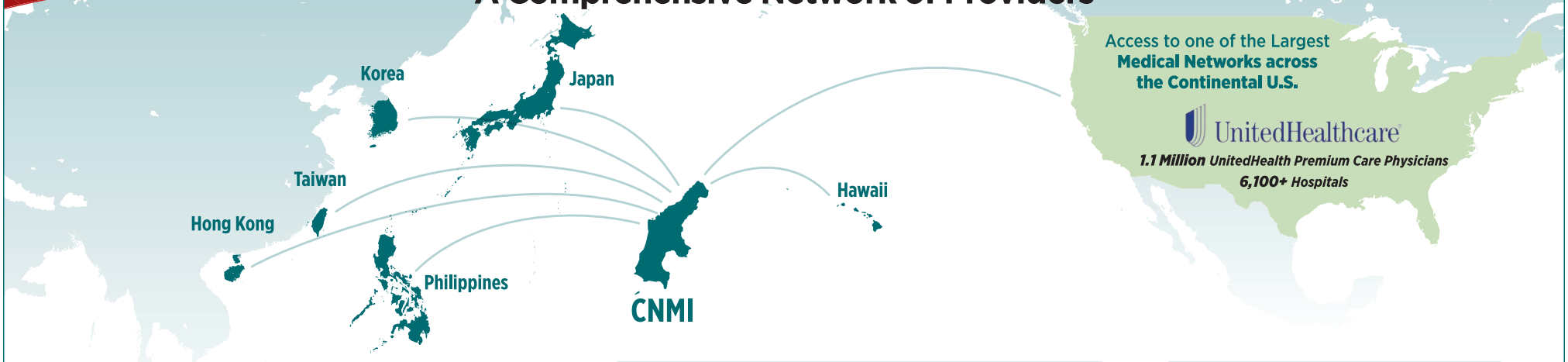

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This is a brief description of the features of Calvo's SelectCare. Before making a final decision, please read the Plan's Federal brochure RI 73-874. All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the Federal brochure. Airfare benefit, Dental Plan and Free Gym Membership are non-FEHB benefits.

Former CUC board chair Manglona is re-nominated

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The former chairperson of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. board of directors representing the First Senatorial District, or Rota, has been re-nominated to the board.

Manglona

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres informed Senate President Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) last Nov. 30 that Miranda Lynn V. Manglona's membership on CUC board is critical to ensure consistency and continuity in fulfilling CUC's goals and objectives.

"I have every confidence that Mrs. Manglona will continue to devote her time and efforts in the best interest of our people," the governor said.

The nomination requires the advice and consent of the Senate. If confirmed, Manglona would serve a four-year term.

With the recent expiration of Manglona's term, Janice Tenorio is currently serving as CUC board pro tem chair.

Torres told Manglona that he is confident that she will continue to devote her time and efforts to providing the best assistance for the betterment of the CNMI's public utilities.

Hofschneider referred the appointment of Manglona Friday to the Senate Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations for review and recommendations.

Miranda was first elected CUC board chair in December 2018.

Ex-special assistant for Women's Affairs Remedio Sablan as CEC board member

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres has appointed former special assistant for Women's Affairs Remedio Reyes Sablan to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Election Commission board representing the Third Senatorial District, or Saipan and the Northern Islands.

"I am confident that Mrs. Reyes is qualified and will be an asset on this important commission," said Torres in a letter dated Nov. 29, 2022 to Senate president Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian).

The governor informed the 71-year-old Sablan that he is confident that she is qualified and will devote her time and efforts to represent the interest of the community on the CEC board.

Torres forwarded to Hof-

See EX-SPECIAL on Next Page

BankGuam Holding Co. declares dividends

BankGuam Holding Co. announced yesterday that its board of directors declared a quarterly cash dividend of $50 per share for the holders of its common stock and a dividend payment to the holders of the company's 7.08% Floating Rate Noncumulative Preferred Stock, Series A, at its board's regular meeting on Nov. 28, 2022. The dividends will be paid on Dec. 30, 2022, to shareholders of record as of Dec. 15, 2022. ***(BOG)***

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Website: cnmibpl-hcplb.net

Pursuant to P. L. 8-41, Section 11, Governor Ralph Torres and Lt. Governor Arnold I. Palacios, through the Board of Professional Licensing (BPL) are hereby giving notice that it will hold its quarterly board meeting on ***Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at 8:30a.m.*** on Saipan. The meeting will be held at the BPL-**HCPLB Conference Room, Capitol Hill, Saipan.**

AGENDA

I. Meeting Call to Order
II. Determination of Quorum
III. Review and Adoption of Agenda
IV. Review and Adoption of Minutes (07/07/2022)
V. Public Comments
VI. Chairperson's Report
VII. Director's Report
- Introduction of New Staff
- 2022 Financial Report
- 2022 Annual Citizen Centric Report
- Update on the Energov Program

VIII. Investigator's Report
IX. Communications from the Governor's Office & Legislature
A. Governor's Office
B. Legislature
X. Old Business
A. Proposed Regulations for Real Property Appraiser
B. Proposed Local Examination for Real Property Appraiser
XI. New Business
XII. Pending Applications for Board's Review
A. New Application
B. Renewal Applications
XIII. Miscellaneous Business
XIV. Executive Session: The Board may vote to meet in executive session to consult with Counsel on pending or anticipated legal matters.
XV. Announcements
A. Next Meeting Date
B. Adjournment of Meeting

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Man allegedly assaults sister for eavesdropping

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Superior Court has imposed a $15,000 cash bail on a man accused of assaulting his sister with the back side of a machete after he allegedly caught her eavesdropping on an argument between him and their mother and telling their other siblings about it.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho imposed last week a $15,000 cash bail on Billy John Andonius Billy, who is accused of assaulting his sister with the back side of a machete.

Billy, 22, is currently facing charges of assault, assault with a dangerous weapon, and disturbing the peace.

Following the hearing, Billy was remanded back to Department of Corrections custody and was ordered to return to court for a preliminary hearing on Dec. 7. His arraignment was set for on Dec. 19.

At the hearing, assistant attorney general DeJon Redd appeared for the government while assistant public defender Tyler Scott represented Billy.

According to court documents, Billy allegedly got into an argument with his mother after he asked her for $20 and she would not give him the money. Meanwhile, Billy's sister was allegedly on her cell phone telling another sibling that their brother and mother were arguing. When the victim put down the phone, Billy allegedly threw her cell phone at the wall.

The victim said she shouted at Billy, who then threatened to kill them.

Billy then allegedly left and returned holding a machete in his left hand and proceeded to swing the back side of the machete at the victim, hitting her on the right cheek before swinging the machete again and hitting her on the right thigh. As Billy was swinging the machete, he was allegedly saying that he was not afraid to kill them.

Billy allegedly hit the victim a second time on her right cheek with the machete and she claims she felt like she was going to lose consciousness.

Responding police officers observed that the victim's cheek was purple and swollen.

PRACTICE DROP U.S. AIR FORCE PHOTO BY YASUO OSAKABE

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Benjamin Pall and Airman 1st Class Riley Henagar, both with the 36th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-130J loadmasters, discuss airdrop operations over Saipan, Dec. 1, 2022, during Operation Christmas Drop 2022. Events like OCD 2022 deliver assistance to remote populations while also offering aircrew an opportunity to maintain preparedness for real world emergencies.

Rip currents seen until Friday

The public is being warned that there is a high risk of rip currents through Friday afternoon. Rip currents can sweep even the best swimmers away from shore into deeper water.

Based on the information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, surf has decreased below hazardous levels along north facing reefs, but dangerous rip currents will continue along east facing reefs on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota for the next few days.

The public is therefore advised to swim near a lifeguard. If caught in a rip current, relax and float. Don't swim against the current. If able, swim in a direction following the shoreline. If unable to escape, face the shore and call or wave for help. ***(PR)***

OAG

From Page 1

agreement [and] the deadline to respond is Dec. 30. We don't intend to offer anything else after this," said Glass.

Following the hearing, local media outlets tried to get Glass to divulge details about the proposed plea agreement that has yet to be filed in court, but he chose not to comment at this time.

Torres, who was present, yielded to his attorney, Victorino Torres, regarding the plea agreement and where they stand on the matter, but Torres said he would not comment at this time.

Aside from the plea agreement, a matter discussed at length during the status conference was the trial date and jury selection.

Tolentino set a jury trial date in this case for Feb. 13, despite the opposition of the defense.

The jury trial was initially supposed to begin on July 5 but the date has since been vacated.

"This matter has been pending for over 10 months. I have to get the ball rolling on this matter. The court order stands, the jury trial for this case will begin on Feb. 13," said Tolentino.

Back in April, the Office of the Attorney General filed criminal charges against Torres alleging 12 counts of misconduct in public office and one count of theft relating to the issuance of airline tickets for premium class travel for himself and/or first lady Diann T. Torres. The governor was also accused of contempt for failure to appear in compliance with a legislative subpoena.

Back in August, Tolentino issued multiple orders in this criminal suit, one of which was an order to grant, in part, and deny, in part, Torres' motion for the withdrawal or disqualification of the Office of the Attorney General as a prosecutor.

It was in this motion that the judge ordered the dismissal of the contempt charge against Torres.

Specifically, Tolentino found that Glass, the head prosecutor in the criminal case against Torres, may have been exposed to privileged and confidential information that prevents him from prosecuting Torres for contempt, therefore the charge was dismissed.

In the upcoming jury trial, Torres will only be tried on 12 counts of misconduct in public office and one count of theft relating to the issuance of airline tickets for premium class travel for himself and/or the first lady.

CASTRO

From Page 1

ties, and Stability Together, or BOOST Program.

Rep. Celina R. Babauta (D-Saipan), who chairs the House of Representatives' Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations, said yesterday that the governor's chief of staff has requested the panel for another extension.

In response to *Saipan Tribune*'s inquiry, Babauta said that Castro has not submitted any documents to the committee yet, but did submit a summary response to the subpoena.

Castro sent an email to Babauta and House Committee on Ways and Means chair Rep. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota) over the weekend, thanking them for allowing him to provide the summary response and for providing him another extension until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 10am, to submit full documents.

Castro stated in the email that he is currently traveling and will work through the weekend to gather any correspondence related to the administration of the BOOST Program that he has on record.

The two House committees canceled their scheduled joint meeting last Friday regarding the BOOST Program after Castro asked for more time to respond to their subpoena.

Babauta earlier explained that there was no need to hold Castro in contempt after granting him an extension.

The committees issued the subpoena to compel some entities and persons, including Castro, to produce documents related to the BOOST Program and testify before the panels.

Castro missed the first deadline on Nov. 29. The second deadline was last weekend.

The committees want to hold a meeting in their bid to find out, among other things, who have been awarded under the BOOST Program and those who have been denied, or are still awaiting disposition. Bank of Saipan is the administrator of the program.

DPS

From Page 1

of Public Safety spokesperson Adrian Pangelinan, DPS has yet to determine as of yesterday whether Damian Wenio, the man whose body was found decomposing in the jungles of the vacant lot next to Triple J Truckload Store, was killed or if it was a natural death.

Pangelinan said that DPS has already recommended to the Office of the Attorney General that the OAG arrange for an autopsy to be performed on the body.

"Due to the state the body was found in, we are unable to say what was the cause of death, although at this time we are strongly recommending an autopsy through the AG's Office as we continue an investigation," he said

Saipan Tribune also reached out to OAG Criminal Division Chief Prosecutor Chester Hinds, who confirmed that DPS has recommended an autopsy. As of press time, Hinds could not officially confirm that an autopsy would be done, but he said the OAG is considering moving forward with one.

"Yes, we are considering an autopsy. But the AG makes the final decision on whether an autopsy is done," he said.

As for who will be conducting the autopsy, Hinds said that Dr. Philip Dauterman at the Commonwealth Health Center would most likely perform the autopsy.

The decomposed body was found in the jungle of the vacant lot next to Triple J Truckload Store and across the Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa at around 2:20pm last Friday.

At the time, DPS and family members chose to withhold the name of the deceased, but Pangelinan has confirmed his identity as that of Wenio, 38. Family members who have reported him missing several weeks ago identified him as the 38-year-old Chuukese man they had been looking for. The man is believed to have been dead for at least two weeks prior to the discovery of his body.

Although the body was reportedly found at around 2:20pm, when *Saipan Tribune* got on scene at around 3:30pm, the investigators had yet to proceed with their investigation as they were still awaiting a briefing on how to proceed.

In an interview with assistant chief of police Capt. Simon Manacop at the scene, he said Wenio's body was found in an advanced stage of decomposition and was reported missing on Thursday. Manacop said it was actually the family of the deceased who called the police to inform them as they had been searching for Wenio for several weeks now prior to reporting him missing.

The man's brothers told *Saipan Tribune* they found Wenio's body in the jungle at around 2pm before reporting it to police. According to DPS, the man was only officially reported missing the day before his body was found.

EX-SPECIAL

From Page 3

schneider Thursday Sablan's résumé, police clearance, statement of interest, drug test receipt, and drug test result.

The appointment requires the advice and consent of the Senate. If confirmed, Sablan will serve a four-year term, which will expire on July 21, 2025.

Sablan has extensive experience in administrative and management positions. She served, among other positions, as the first director of the CNMI Bar Association from 2000 to 2002.

The CEC currently has seven board members. Five commissioners are needed to have a quorum.

Jesus I. Sablan, who has chaired the CEC board since 2018, disclosed to *Saipan Tribune* shortly after the counting of the votes in the runoff election last Nov. 26 that he will resign after the completion of this election due to health reasons.

The 74-year-old Sablan still has three years and six months left on his term.

ANTI-CANCER DONATION

Mount Carmel School's National Honor Society chapter recently donated $835 to the Commonwealth Cancer Association. Throughout the school's fall semester, the MCS NHS chapter coordinated a variety of fundraisers in an effort to support the CCA's revitalization efforts of cancer awareness and community outreach. In the photo, from the left, are MCS business manager John S. Blanco, MCS school counselor Tobed Smith, MCS NHS member Kristin Torres, MCS NHS member Brissa Hunter, CCA interim executive director Lynn F. Tenorio, CCA Social Media and Marketing coordinator Viveka P. Castro, CCA board of directors member Nicolette V. Inos, MCS NHS members Kayannie Peter, Jill Millari, and Yuri Sasamoto, NHS adviser Keiko Yamagata, and MCS president Frances T. Taimanao.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Child care providers undergo required trainings

Twenty child care providers from Saipan and Tinian recently participated in a training on a series of 21 parent-completed questionnaires designed to screen the developmental performance of children between the ages of one month to 5 ½ years.

The training, held on Oct. 29, 2022, was held at the Evergreen Learning Training Center in Chalan Kanoa and was facilitated by Grace Mallari, Evergreen Learning Training and Development specialist, together with Erlaine Evangelista, Evergreen Learning coach.

The training was officially called "Introduction to Ages and Stages Questionnaires 3rd Edition," which is a comprehensive, reliable screening tool that measures development in five domains: communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving, and personal-social.

During this five-hour training, participants who had not been previously trained on the ASQ-3 learned the purpose and benefits of ASQ-3 as a screening tool. Participants also engaged in hands-on exercises on how to administer, interpret, and communicate screening results.

This training is made possible through funding from the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Care, and CNMI Child Care and Development Fund Program under the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs.

On Oct. 22, a total of 20 participants from different child care centers completed a series of trainings, consisting of four Brain Builders modules, which included brain basics, cognitive development and the stages of growth, executive functions, and social-emotional development.

Module 1s included the brain parts, their functions, and the stages of brain growth and development. The phrase "executive function" refers to a set of skills. These skills underlie the capacity to plan ahead and meet goals. They are skills that display self-control, follow multiple-step directions even when interrupted, and stay focused despite distractions. Social development deals with how children establish friendships and build relationships, handle conflicts with peers, establish conflict resolutions to solve social challenges, and interact with others. Lastly, emotional development is the ability/capacity to manage and/or regulate emotions and strong feelings, which often lead to building the ability to manage successful interactions and relationships with others.

These training modules were facilitated by Melissa Palacios, Science of Early Learning coordinator. She was assisted by Rayanna Fitial, Science of Early Learning administrative assistant, both from Evergreen Learning. The training was conducted via Zoom.

Previously, on Oct. 8, 2022, Saipan-based child care centers participated in two-hour trainings on required health and safety training topics that included Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, among other subjects, at the Evergreen Learning Training Center in Chalan Kanoa.

The training, conducted by Maricar I. Pena, Evergreen Learning's quality care specialist, had a total of 12 participants in the morning session and 14 participants in the afternoon session.

It taught participants about preventing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, using safe sleep practices, and preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, abusive head trauma, and child maltreatment.

During the morning session, participants learned factors that have been linked to sudden infant death and the ways to reduce the risk, and they explored practices that create a safe sleep environment for babies. In the afternoon session, participants learned the dangers of shaking babies and causing abusive head trauma. They also learned to identify strategies for coping with and calming a crying baby. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Please be advised that the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority's (COTA) Call-A-Ride Saipan Demand Responsive Shared Ride Services inclusive of COTA's Administrative office will be closed on the following day for Professional Development

Monday, December 12, 2022

COTA's Operational and Administrative hours will resume on **Tuesday, December 13, 2022.** We would like to remind our community to plan their trips accordingly. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,
/s/ ***Alfreda Camacho Maratita***
Special Assistant
for Public Transportation

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INVITATION FOR BID
CUC-IFB-23-003

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF MEDIUM-DUTY BOOM TRUCK VEHICLE

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids for the supply and delivery of a medium-duty boom truck for the Power Plant in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked ***"CUC-IFB-23-003, Supply and Delivery of a Medium Duty Boom Truck"*** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 4, 2023** at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before the due date and time or post-marked before the submission deadline. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid or supply under the contract. The IFB does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the bid under this request, or to procure or contract for goods. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

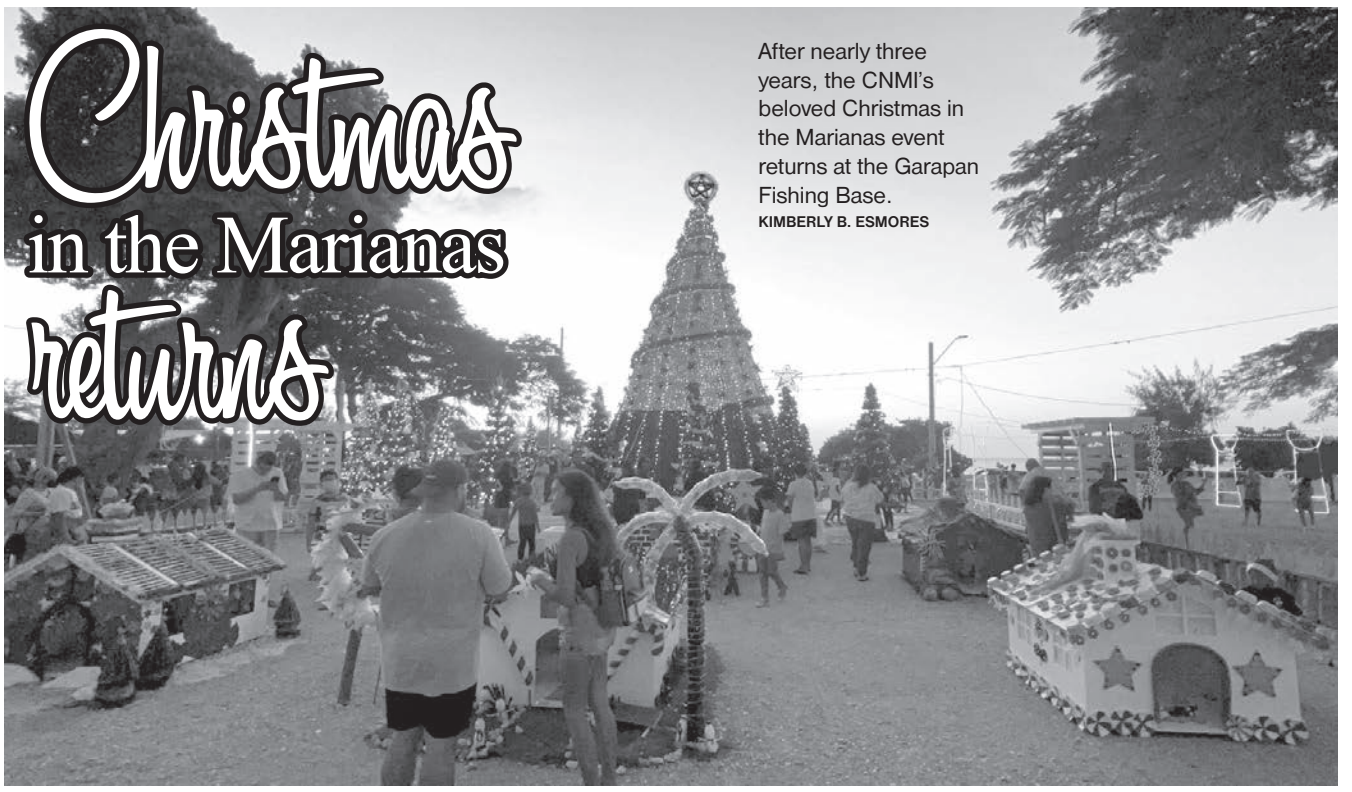
Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on December 19, 2022,** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC's Purchasing Administrator, via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with copies to Jubal Slayer, CUC's Technical Manager for Oil via email at jubal.slayer@cucgov.org and Christie L. Sablan, CUC's Senior Administrative Technician at christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in the said bids, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids submitted shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

Christmas in the Marianas returns



After nearly three years, the CNMI's beloved Christmas in the Marianas event returns at the Garapan Fishing Base.
KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

After nearly three years, the CNMI's beloved Christmas in the Marianas event has returned at the Garapan Fishing Base, bigger and better than ever, according to the Marianas Visitors Authority.

The MVA was forced to cancel its signature event since the COVID-19 pandemic plagued the CNMI and the rest of the world in the last two years, said MVA community projects supervisor Martin Duenas. However, the beloved event has finally returned and MVA has gone all out to ensure it is one that the CNMI will not soon forget.

"This is the first time since before the pandemic. As you know, we were not able to get everybody together because of the social distancing restrictions. But this year, we brought it back and we went all out because restrictions have finally been lifted. Our community, especially our children, deserve something like this, to feel the joy of the Christmas season. So this is a great start to open up the holiday season," he said.

Last Saturday kicked off the celebration with a light-up countdown. "We had the lighting ceremony for all the sculptures that are going to be on display throughout the holiday season," Duenas said.

The event itself will be held every Saturday of the month of December and will conclude with a Christmas parade on Jan. 7, 2023. However, the sculptures will remain lit up throughout the month.

Duenas explained that these kinds of events are important to the people of the Marianas who prize religious traditions this time of year. "Here in the Marianas, it's pretty much traditional for us to be celebrating Christmas. So this event is very important to not only the MVA, but the community as well as it embraces and looks forward to this kind of holiday celebration," he said.

As for the highlights of this year's Christmas in the Marianas event, Duenas said it will be the caroling competition, the costume contest, and the Christmas tree and Christmas village decorating competition. The winners of all events will be announced during the big Christmas in the Marianas parade on Jan. 7, 2023.

"The highlights for the Christmas in the Marianas is the Christmas caroling, the costume contest, the Christmas tree decorating contest, and also the mini Christmas village contests. The competition winners will be announced at the parade on Jan. 7," he said.

The event used to be held at the Paseo de Marianas but was moved this year to the more expansive Garapan Fishing Base.

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
The trees at the Garapan Fishing Base are festooned with colorful lights.

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
A giant Christmas tree serves as the main attraction at the Christmas in the Marianas event at the Garapan Fishing Base.

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
People check out the different sculptures and installations on display at the Christmas in the Marianas event at the Garapan Fishing Base.

JOB VACANY ANNOUNCEMENT

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CNMI military affairs bureau launches its official website

The Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs has launched its official website to provide members of the public a designated online resource to learn about all military activities occurring in the CNMI, to include proposed military programs that the U.S. Department of Defense is pursuing to implement on our islands.

The website—which can be accessed at https://cbma.gov.mp/—provides supporting resources regarding military activities in the CNMI, to include applicable federal laws, regulations, and executive orders governing natural resources and the environment that the Department of Defense must comply with, which covers all military activities in the CNMI, said Glenna Sakisat Palacios, special assistant for military affairs.

The website is a work-in progress. "We have in our possession over 40,000 accessible records that we have gathered over the past three years and those records will eventually be made available on the website for ready access by members of our communities, to include information of upcoming military training schedules," said Palacios.

One of the great features of the website, Palacios said, is that it would enable the public to get involved by submitting comments, thoughts, or questions about any military projects or the overall U.S. military program in CNMI, and to subscribe to updates on military activities in the CNMI. ***(PR)***

ON THE NET

■ https://cbma.gov.mp/

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Photo shows the homepage of the Commonwealth Bureau of Military Affairs' official website.

NMC to host free info session on Dec. 15

Individuals who are interested in furthering their education are encouraged to attend Northern Marianas College's free Information Session on Thursday, Dec. 15, 2022. The event will cover information on the admissions application process, financial aid, class registration, and academic programs and services.

The info session will be held from 5:30pm to 6:30pm in the Olympio T. Borja Library at the college's As Terlaje campus. Participants of the info session will qualify to have their application and placement test fees waived for NMC's upcoming spring 2023 semester, a savings of about $75.

NMC offers several degree and certificate programs, including a bachelor of science in education (concentration in early childhood education, elementary education, rehabilitation and human services, or special education), bachelor of science in business management (concentration in accounting or without concentration); associate of arts in business, associate of applied science in business administration (emphasis in accounting, business management, or computer applications), associate of applied science in hospitality management, associate of arts in liberal arts (emphasis in education, health and physical education, pre-engineering, social work, or without emphasis), associate of science in nursing, associate of science in agriculture, associate of science in natural resource management, associate of applied science in criminal justice, and associate of science in fire science technology. The certificate programs at NMC include basic law enforcement, business management, computer applications, early childhood education, fire science technology, hospitality operations, nursing assistant, and small business management.

NMC's spring 2023 semester will begin on Jan. 17, 2023. A list of the classes that are offered can be found at www.marianas.edu. For additional information or inquiries, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 237-6769/70/71/72 or email oar@marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

Free webinars on federal contracting

The Guam Procurement Technical Assistance Center is offering free webinars this ***December***. Webinars are held every Wednesday from 10am to 11:30am via Zoom.

Zoom links are emailed to all registered attendees 30 minutes before the webinar.

■ **Dec. 7, 2022 – How to Register in SAM** – *Vendors need an active SAM registration to participate in Federal contracting. The Guam PTAC will take you through the new Entity Validation process, the actual SAM registration, and follow-up requirements. We will also discuss the new annual renewal process.*

■ **Dec. 14, 2022 – Federal Contract Opportunities** – *SAM.gov is the portal for Federal Contract Opportunities. The Guam PTAC will show you how to use the website to ensure you do not miss any opportunities. Opportunity types, search filters, and search strategies will be discussed.*

■ **Dec. 21, 2022 – Cybersecurity: Federal Contractor Responsibilities** – *Department of Defense vendors need to protect Covered Unclassified Information. We will discuss DOD's current requirements as well as the upcoming Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC 2.0).*

■ **Dec. 28, 2022 – Government of Guam Procurement** – *The Guam PTAC will explain Government of Guam Procurement, where to find opportunities, and how to submit bids.*

To register, visit: https://www.guamptac.com/news-and-events.php ***(PR)***

MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
18TH ANNUAL
Christmas in the Marianas
SEE YOU THERE!
DECEMBER 3,10,17, 2022 & JANUARY 7, 2023
GARAPAN FISHING BASE, SAIPAN, THE MARIANAS
5:00 PM - 9:00 PM
LIVE HOLIDAY PERFORMANCE!
Christmas trees, caroling, skits, costumes, food, games, lights and sculptures, and more!
CHRISTMAS PARADE, DECEMBER 17 - 6:00 PM
AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK TO GARAPAN FISHING BASE
ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER 10TH ONLY
5:00 p.m. Holiday Music
Christmas Skits
5:30 p.m. Green Meadows School
5:45 p.m. Admiral Hopwood Middle School
6:00 p.m. Dandan Middle School
6:15 p.m. Agape Christian School
6:30 p.m. Mt. Carmel School
6:45 p.m. Saipan Community School
7:00 p.m. Tanapag Middle School
7:15 p.m. Saipan Southern High School
7:30 p.m. Marianas High School
7:45 p.m. Agape Christian School
8:00 p.m. Saipan International School
8:30 p.m. Holiday Music
9:00 p.m. Closing
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XXXII, Issue No. 242

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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EDITORIAL

China got COVID wrong, and now Xi Jinping is paying the price

PETER PARKS/AFP/GETTY IMAGES/TNS

Students light candles on the campus of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, in solidarity with protests held on the mainland over Beijing's COVID-19 restrictions, in Hong Kong on Nov. 28, 2022. Hundreds of people have taken to the streets in China's major cities in a rare outpouring of public anger against the state over its zero-COVID policy.

Protest movements routinely bring symbols that help define their cause. Umbrellas serving as shields against pepper spray came to symbolize demonstrations in Hong Kong in 2014 and again in 2019 as citizens protested anti-democratic measures pushed by Beijing.

Earlier this year in Iran, women cutting off their hair emerged as a signature gesture for protests over the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman arrested by Iranian morality police for violating the country's dress code for women.

Now in China, a simple blank sheet of paper has become the defining imagery for massive demonstrations against President Xi Jinping's zero-tolerance approach to COVID-19.

The brave protests mark the most significant display of defiance against the country's Communist Party regime since the deadly demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

At protests across the country, demonstrators have been holding aloft blank sheets of paper as a gesture against the Chinese government's bids to censor or bury social media posts about the spread of dissent, and about the government's role in an apartment building fire last week in the far western city of Urumqi. Protesters blame China's stringent COVID-19 policies for the delay in putting out the fire, which killed 10 of the building's residents.

Whether China's COVID restrictions played a role in those deaths remains unclear. What is clear, however, is that Chinese citizens are fed up with outdated, draconian anti-COVID measures that are doing far more harm than good to China's people and economy.

For America and much of the rest of the world, COVID-19 isn't the suffocating crisis that it once was. On Thanksgiving,

See CHINA on Next Page

Americans love to hate their politics

By DAVID A. HOPKINS
Bloomberg Opinion

David A. Hopkins is an associate professor of political science at Boston College and the author of Red Fighting Blue: How Geography and Electoral Rules Polarize American Politics.

In the 2018 midterm elections, 50% of eligible U.S. citizens turned out to vote. Because Americans are always less inclined to show up at the polls in years when the presidency isn't on the ballot, half of the nation feeling sufficiently motivated to vote was a remarkable event. Heading into this year, the question among political scientists and other analysts was whether the 2018 surge would prove to be a one-time spike or reflect a more enduring change in citizen behavior.

Now the votes are nearly all in, even in the habitually slow-counting states of California and Arizona, and we have an answer: According to data collected by Michael P. McDonald of the University of Florida, an estimated 47% of eligible voters cast ballots in 2022. And the questions are what explains this change, and what it means.

First, the history. That 47% is a slight decrease from 2018, but it's still notable. Aside from 2018, according to McDonald's data, turnout has not reached 50% in any midterm contest in the 100 years since women were granted the right to vote in 1920. In fact, except for 2018, turnout hasn't been as strong in a midterm election since 1970—just before the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18. The turnout rate was even higher in states with traditions of robust civic engagement or especially competitive races this year, reaching 55% in Pennsylvania, 59% in Michigan, 60% in Wisconsin, and 61% in Maine, Minnesota and Oregon.

The record turnout of 2018 was explained at the time as one of many unique consequences of Donald Trump's election. Trump wasn't the only recent president who provoked angry citizens to build a national movement to defeat his partisan allies in a congressional midterm election; the anti-Trump "Resistance" resembled similar countermobilizations during the presidencies of Barack Obama, George W. Bush and Bill Clinton. But Trump's distinctive ability to galvanize his supporters—even in an election in which he wasn't on the ballot—appeared to produce high turnout among his own party as well, allowing Republicans to gain seats in the Senate even as they lost control of the House.

It made sense to view the voting boom in 2018 as a logical response to the ascent of a president who dominated the political world like no other figure in memory, producing unusually strong emotional responses among adherents and detractors alike. But that explanation just makes the continued surge in 2022 more puzzling.

President Joe Biden not only fails to stimulate the unprecedented personal fascination that Trump inspired on both sides, but he also lacks even the symbolic or charismatic importance of other immediate predecessors such as Obama, Bush and Clinton. Biden hasn't attracted a visible legion of passionate devotees, nor has he inspired his opponents to form a successor to the Tea Party movement.

In other words, what drove Americans to the polls last month probably wasn't Joe Biden.

A likelier explanation is that we have entered an age in which politics has become an unusually focal element of American life. Even after Trump's departure from office, political issues and conflicts have remained central topics of national interest and discussion. And as the perpetual competition for office between Democrats and Republicans becomes increasingly associated with wider national debates over the direction of American culture and the status of American democracy, the perceived stakes of even non-presidential elections seem to be on the rise.

When turnout rates started to decline in the 1980s and 1990s, concerned observers often argued that this mass withdrawal from politics reflected popular distrust of government and disillusionment with politics. But participation levels have rebounded in the last few elections without a corresponding improvement in Americans' views of government. Instead, the increased sharpening of party differences has convinced more and more citizens that they should really care which side gains political power. Even in the increasing number of states and districts where there isn't much competition, Americans still increasingly feel motivated to express themselves by heading to the polls.

That is the silver lining, if there is one, of today's bitter, culturally charged partisan warfare: It has made civic engagement more meaningful for millions of citizens, proving that—for all its other problems—polarization can be the antidote to political apathy.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

As demonstrations erupt in China, Xi Jinping is caught in his own COVID trap

By TRUDY RUBIN
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Trudy Rubin is a columnist and editorial-board member for the Philadelphia Inquirer. Readers may write to her at: Philadelphia Inquirer, P.O. Box 8263, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101, or by email at trubin@phillynews.com.

The video of "Chongqing Superman" has gone viral amidst the explosion of protests across China against the government's "zero COVID" policy.

A man in a grey T-shirt with a Superman backpack stands on a street corner in the southwest Chinese city of Chongqing, ranting against the soaring price of carrots—and the government's failed strategy to totally eliminate COVID. He fiercely denounces the "lack of freedom and [the] poverty" that have resulted from an endless series of lockdowns of major cities, neighborhoods, and residential compounds.

"If the city government is wrong, it can only continue to be wrong," Chongqing Superman shouts to an equally furious crowd (according to a YouTube translation). "Otherwise someone must be responsible." The crowd cheers, and rescues Superman from the police who try to grab him.

China's current COVID upheaval demonstrates what can happen when an absolute ruler rejects all criticism in the belief that he is infallible. The Beijing regime, with its massive surveillance apparatus, will probably crush the demonstrations, which are more of a warning to Xi than a threat to his political survival. Yet his botched war on the pandemic will undermine him at home and abroad.

The government's zero-COVID strategy of lockdowns—barricading neighborhoods and sealing apartment doors—has decimated Chinese businesses and impoverished many people. After two years, the population hoped for a relaxation of restrictions. Instead, they have reemerged in the wake of the omicron variant.

"The 'zero-COVID' policy is a complete disaster for China," says the Council on Foreign Relations' China expert Joshua Kurlantzick. "If Xi keeps it up it will ruin their economy."

Yet Xi shows no signs of changing course.

The Chinese leader managed to get his country's constitution amended in October to permit him an unprecedented third term, and has elevated himself to the status of another Mao Zedong. Before Xi, notes Kurlantzick, a group of 8 to 15 top officials around the president were involved in running China. "In the past," he says, "they could change a policy because it was not linked to one man who gutted all other sources of information."

Kurlantzick's point reminded me of a 2010 interview I conducted with Chinese Health Minister Chen Zhu in Beijing. He emphasized the need for Chinese media and nongovernmental organizations to provide an alternative source of information to government officials in order to prevent future health disasters.

"SARS has taught us a very good lesson," the minister said, referring to a 2002 epidemic in China that broke out because local officials refused to report it. "Now we emphasize information transparency and immediate disclosure."

Instead, Xi has censored all information sources that might challenge his COVID policy (which is why Chinese demonstrators are holding up blank white sheets of paper). He has stuck by rolling lockdowns, mass testing and tracing without a serious vaccine policy as a follow-up.

That draconian approach worked for two years—keeping deaths extremely low in comparison with the United States and Europe. But it has faltered with the emergence of omicron and other variants. Meantime, the population developed no natural immunity.

As successful vaccines came on line, Xi opted for vaccine nationalism. China refused to import foreign vaccines based on mRNA technology, which are far more effective than Chinese-made vaccines. Moreover, China's elderly are woefully under vaccinated.

"If they get rid of this lockdown policy, they could lose millions of old people," says Kurlantzick.

In other words, Xi Jinping has backed himself into a self-made COVID trap.

According to a recent Atlantic Council study, China's COVID shutdowns have deeply harmed the domestic economy—especially the entertainment, restaurant, tourism and other service industries, along with the property and construction sectors—that provide a large share of the country's employment.

Add this to Xi's crackdown on China's tech sector, the new U.S. limits on exports to China of sophisticated computer chips, and pressures from a roiling global economy, and China's growth rate is predicted to slow to 3.2% for 2022. This would be fine for a developed Western country, but is far below the official Chinese target of 5.5%, which is in line with Xi's efforts to best the West.

Yet it is Xi's self-image as an infallible leader that is most at risk of cracking alongside his COVID policy. He has established a personality cult that forces students, bureaucrats and businesses to study Xi Jinping Thought—recalling the days when Chinese used to memorize Mao's teachings from his "Little Red Book."

Now the Chinese leader is backed into a corner. Like Russia's Vladimir Putin, he has crushed all challengers and critics of his mistaken policy. If he sticks to his COVID approach, he will be saddled with endless lockdowns that undermine China's economy. If he admits failure, his "mandate from heaven" will be seriously tarnished.

Either way, he has shown that self-isolated authoritarian leaders hold the seeds of their own destruction. The big question is: How long does it take?

Once powerful CNN now riddled with more layoffs and cutbacks

By JOE BATTENFELD
Boston Herald

The dismantling of CNN as the Democrats' leading network could be on the way with layoffs and cutbacks putting the once-dominant media outlet in decline.

CNN began notifying staffers on Wednesday that there would be major layoffs of paid contributors and others "as part of a recalibrated reporting strategy," according to a memo published by The Hollywood Reporter.

"It will be a difficult time for everyone," CNN CEO Chris Licht wrote in the memo. "Our people are the heart and soul of this organization. It is incredibly hard to say goodbye to any one member of the CNN team, much less many."

The cable giant has long been the leading anti-Trump media outlet with a relentless attack on the former president even after he left office. During Trump's presidency, CNN reveled in being part of the "resistance" and saw its ratings jump.

But lately the network's ratings have lagged behind Fox News and even MSNBC. Now that's embarrassing.

The anti-Trump fervor could change with the new owner, Warner Bros. Discovery, whose CEO has indicated he wants more of a balance at the station.

Trump-hating media reporter Brian Stelter, legal reporter Jeffrey Toobin and left-leaning White House correspondent John Harwood have already departed the network and more will be leaving soon.

Licht described the changes as a "gut punch" and the network began informing employees Thursday of the layoffs.

"Let's take care of each other this week," Licht wrote.

The layoffs are not a surprise – they have been planned for months as part of CNN's effort to restructure and vastly reduce spending.

Most of the network's leading anchors will not be affected by the cuts yet, according to The New York Times.

But the network plans to slash about $100 million in spending, which undoubtedly will affect the news gathering operations.

Licht earlier this year cut CNN's original programming and documentaries" and killed the cable network's streaming service after just weeks.

One network insider told Fox News that "morale is as low as it's ever been" though staffers who are laid off will get severance.

What the "recalibrated reporting strategy" means is unclear, but that could signal CNN will have less paid Democratic talking heads.

CHINA

From Page 8

families feasted in homes across the U.S., while fans packed into stadiums to savor the rite of football on Turkey Day. A hemisphere away in Qatar, the World Cup continues to captivate the globe with corner kicks and saves inside arenas filled with unmasked fans.

In China, citizens remain trapped in a pandemic limbo.

A third of China's population was estimated to have been under partial or complete lockdowns in November, according to Nomura, a Japan-based global financial services firm.

Earlier this year, Shanghai, China's financial capital, endured a two-month lockdown that took a devastating toll on residents' mental health as well as on the city's economic output. The situation was even worse in the far western province of Xinjiang, where Urumqi is located. Residents were barred from leaving their homes for as long as 100 days.

President Xi, who secured an unprecedented third term as China's leader, is paying a stiff price for inflicting on his people a misguided approach toward COVID. The lockdowns were meant to eradicate the virus's spread, but lockdowns only work as short-term measures to buy time for the development and distribution of effective vaccines. Xi opted to rely on China's own vaccines, which have proved to be far less effective than Western versions. And many elderly Chinese in particular have worried about side effects and have not had at least two jabs of any vaccine at all.

As a result, Chinese citizens have been trapped in their homes for months—sometimes in buildings ringed by barricades—and COVID-19 cases have continued to surge.

The country's economic outlook grows gloomier by the day. Unemployment among youth has hit 20%, profits at Chinese companies big and small have slumped, and China's unlikely to hit its projections of 5.5% economic growth for 2022, The New York Times reported.

Xi finds himself boxed in by past mistakes. If he doubles down on stringent COVID restrictions, he risks the potential for demonstrations to metastasize into unrest of unmanageable proportions. If he relents to protesters' demands to rescind lockdowns, China's COVID problem could dramatically worsen.

So far, police have been measured in their response to demonstrations. Xi clearly realizes an overreaction by the government at this point could lead to an existential crisis for his regime.

But his blueprint for the restoration of calm must include an abandonment of his zero-COVID approach. To do that, he'll have to cooperate with Western nations and allow more efficient COVID vaccines to come into the country. And Beijing will have to markedly step up vaccination outreach efforts, particularly to older Chinese.

Finally, Xi must allow his nation's citizens to freely express their deep frustration about a pandemic policy that has made their lives miserable, imperiled their livelihoods and derailed their nation's economy. The Chinese populace is seething, and Xi must realize he only has himself to blame.

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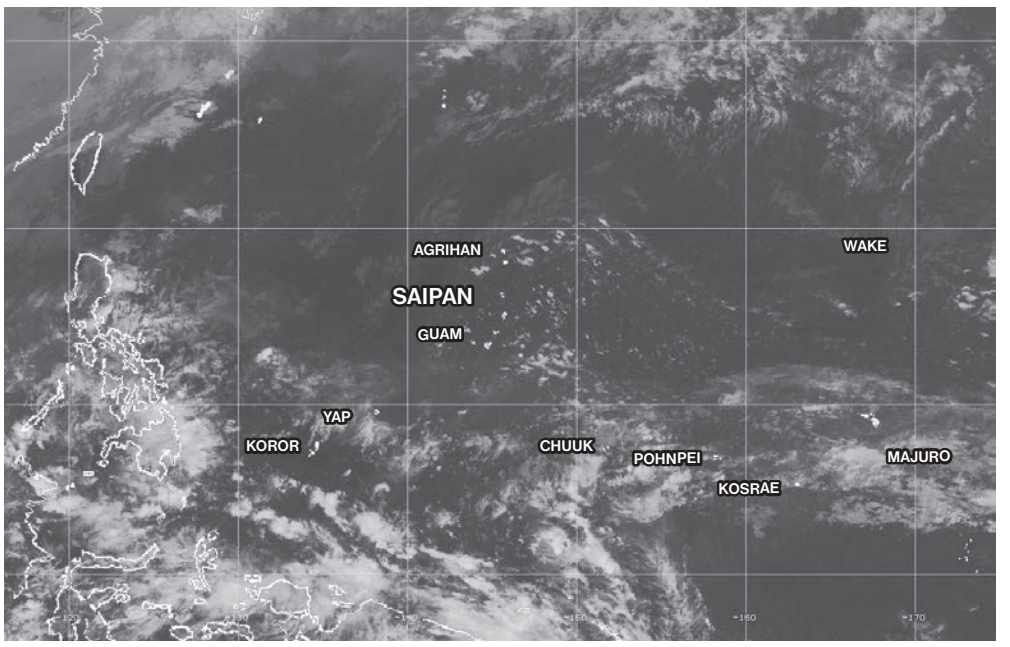
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Scattered showers. Partly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny	Mostly sunny
83° 78°	83° 78°	83° 78°	83° 78°	83° 76°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 8:11 AM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2022

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Moderate to strong trades prevail in the Marianas. Satellite imagery and Doppler radar indicate lines of showers crossing the coastal waters as a broad surface trough enters the region. Ritidian buoy indicates seas are around 10 feet.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Palau	Scattered Thunderstorms	84° / 76°
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	87° / 80°
Pohnpei	Scattered Thunderstorms	86° / 78°
Kosrae	Isolated Thunderstorms	86° / 79°
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 79°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	70° / 60°
Beijing	Sunny	41° / 18°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	68° / 61°
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82° / 72°
London	Partly Cloudy	45° / 33°
Los Angeles	Cloudy	62° / 49°
Manila	Partly Cloudy	90° / 76°
Melbourne	Mostly Sunny	68° / 50°
Miami	Partly Cloudy	79° / 71°
New York	Partly Cloudy	49° / 40°
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	56° / 42°
Paris	Cloudy	42° / 34°
Busan	Mostly Sunny	51° / 38°
Rome	Partly Cloudy	65° / 48°
Salem	Cloudy	65° / 58°
San Francisco	Showers	57° / 46°
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	42° / 29°
Tokyo	Showers	47° / 39°
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	51° / 37°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:29 AM	5:45 PM
Wednesday	6:30 AM	5:46 PM
Thursday	6:30 AM	5:46 PM
Friday	6:31 AM	5:46 PM
Saturday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	4:01 AM	4:18 PM
Wednesday	-	4:53 AM	4:56 PM
Thursday	-	5:46 AM	5:36 PM
Friday	-	6:39 AM	6:18 PM
Saturday	-	7:33 AM	7:03 PM

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
12:38 AM	Low Tide	-0.24
7:25 AM	High Tide	1.57
12:35 PM	Low Tide	0.94
5:49 PM	High Tide	1.76

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 1, 2022

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	7:05AM	9:45AM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	6:00AM	7:45AM	Daily
UA193	7:55PM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	8:00PM	9:50PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:50AM	9:50PM	Daily via Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	11:50PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau
OZ624/701	3:40PM	10:35AM+1	3,6 via Incheon

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

OZ624	3:40PM	7:40PM	3, 6
TW308	4:30PM	8:20PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	4:35PM	8:25PM	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

BX621	3:10PM	6:30PM	3, 7

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:46AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	9:25PM	2:00AM+1	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

PR110	10:05PM	3:55AM+1	Daily
UA184	10:55PM	4:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:40PM	6:30AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA184	12:40AM	6:30AM	3, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA189/174	12:40AM	8:46AM+1	3, 6 via Guam
UA184/174	10:55PM	8:46AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA192/174	10:40PM	8:46AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
OZ704/623	11:50PM	2:40PM+1	2, 5 via Incheon

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ623	9:00AM	2:40PM	3, 6
TW307	10:00AM	3:30PM	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3406	10:10AM	3:30PM	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

BX622	8:00AM	1:10PM	3, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

MARIANAS SOUTHERN AIRWAYS

INITIAL DAILY FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF AUGUST 18, 2022

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:00 A.M.	7:15 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
9:50 A.M.	10:05 A.M.	
4:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
7:35 A.M.	7:50 A.M.	(Except Sundays)
10:25 A.M.	10:40 A.M.	
4:35 P.M.	4:50 P.M.	(Except Saturdays)

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
8:10 A.M.	8:40 A.M.	
1:45 P.M.	2:15 P.M.	

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
9:00 A.M.	9:30 A.M.	
2:35 P.M.	3:05 P.M.	

SAIPAN TO GUAM

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
11:10 A.M.	12:00 P.M.	
5:15 P.M.	6:05 P.M.	

GUAM TO SAIPAN

DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
12:30 P.M.	1:20 P.M.	
6:40 P.M.	7:30 P.M.	

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
3103	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

Business

Wine and dine at reopened Kevin's at ARC

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

In a night that appealed to all senses, wine and hors-d'œuvres were served in Kevin's The Prime Rib and Seafood Restaurant at Aqua Resort Club Saipan during their reopening and 5th Anniversary Wine Tasting event last Thursday night.

ARC general manager Sachiko Gerrard welcomed the VIP guests in attendance to taste the wines and the hors-d'œuvres that were served throughout the night and welcomed everyone to Kevin's as it opened for the holidays.

Kevin's is now open through the whole month of December with limited hours from 6pm to 10pm on Thursdays and Sundays with ARC's new executive chef Inok Lee bringing Italian cuisine to the restaurant's revamped menu.

Their new menu from The Chef's Table is $75 which includes an appetizer, soup, entree, and dessert, while the Chef's Holiday Menu at $100 includes wine flight, appetizer, entremet, entree, and dessert.

"I really hope everybody comes here to try. I don't think anybody will regret it. [They] are going to enjoy it," said Gerrard.

Throughout Thursday evening, with music in the background from the band Channel B, the restaurant featured a bar boasting Pacific Wine and Spirits' five new French vin de pays, or fine wine collection named "Aniti," or spirit in Chamorro.

LEIGH GASES

From left, Guam's Food Guy Ken Stewart, Aqua Resort Club general manager Sachiko Gerrard, and Pacific Wine and Spirits president Dan Matsuno pose with the newly launched Aniti red and white wines during the Kevin's The Prime Rib and Seafood Restaurant reopening and 5th year anniversary wine-tasting event last Thursday.

LEIGH GASES

The wine bar featuring Pacific Wine and Spirits' newly introduced Aniti red and white wines in the Aqua Resort Club's Kevin's The Prime Rib and Seafood Restaurant's menu: Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah.

The wines introduced to Kevin's menu were the Aniti labeled Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, and Syrah.

The wines were then paired with hors-d'œuvres concocted by Lee.

The white wines—Sauvignon Blanc and Chardonnay—were paired with a shucked oyster with green apple granita and crab cake slider with squid ink brioche and guacamole and Italian San Daniele ham with cantaloupe and balsamic gel and salmon rillette, respectively.

The red wines—Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon—were paired with Winter Sweet Pumpkin Gnocchi with Blue Cheese Cream, and hickory wooden smoked beef rib eye with jalapeno aioli. A dessert of red velvet macaron and chocolate souffle was also served.

PWS president Dan Matsuno said it's been a year in the making to create the French wines along with the local brand and label of Aniti, and they have worked together with ARC to launch it in the CNMI– with other hotels on Saipan and Guam to follow suit.

Guam's Food Guy Ken Stewart, who was at the event, said that the wines "were a great introduction to wine from France… What I think more than anything else was how chef Inok Lee paired these wines. He literally tasted them all and created these pairings… as a food guy, he's done an extraordinary job of pairing these wines perfectly with these appetizers… I almost had tears in my eyes [at] how exquisite the pairing was."

Northern Marianas College vice president of Administration and Advancement Frankie Eliptico said that the wines were "smooth, full-bodied, and very delicious… I'm glad that they're introducing new flavor profiles to our local population and I look forward to seeing what other items that they're offering."

Earlier in the evening, Matsuno said he will sponsor some wines for the 2023 NMC's Golf Open which Eliptico said he is looking forward to.

As Musk is learning, content moderation is a messy job

By DAVID KLEPPER and MATT O'BRIEN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Now that he's back on Twitter, neo-Nazi Andrew Anglin wants somebody to explain the rules.

Anglin, the founder of an infamous neo-Nazi website, was reinstated Thursday, one of many previously banned users to benefit from an amnesty granted by Twitter's new owner Elon Musk. The next day, Musk banished Ye, the rapper formerly known as Kanye West, after he posted a swastika with a Star of David in it.

"That's cool," Anglin tweeted Friday. "I mean, whatever the rules are, people will follow them. We just need to know what the rules are."

Ask Musk. Since the world's richest man paid $44 billion for Twitter, the platform has struggled to define its rules for misinformation and hate speech, issued conflicting and contradictory announcements, and failed to full address what researchers say is a troubling rise in hate speech.

As the " chief twit " may be learning, running a global platform with nearly 240 million active daily users requires more than good algorithms and often demands imperfect solutions to messy situations — tough choices that must ultimately be made by a human and are sure to displease someone.

A self-described free speech absolutist, Musk has said he wants to make Twitter a global digital town square. But he also said he wouldn't make major decisions about content or about restoring banned accounts before setting up a " content moderation council " with diverse viewpoints.

He soon changed his mind after polling users on Twitter, and offered reinstatement to a long list of formerly banned users including ex-President Donald Trump, Ye, the satire site The Babylon Bee, the comedian Kathy Griffin and Anglin, the neo-Nazi.

And while Musk's own tweets suggested he would allow all legal content on the platform, Ye's banishment shows that's not entirely the case. The swastika image posted by the rapper falls in the "lawful but awful" category that often bedevils content moderators, according to Eric Goldman, a technology law expert and professor at Santa Clara University law school.

While Europe has imposed rules requiring social media platforms to create policies on misinformation and hate speech, Goldman noted that in the U.S. at least, loose regulations allow Musk to run Twitter as he sees fit, despite his inconsistent approach.

"What Musk is doing with Twitter is completely permissible under U.S. law," Goldman said.

Pressure from the EU may force Musk to lay out his policies to ensure he is complying with the new law, which takes effect next year. Last month, a senior EU official warned Musk that Twitter would have to improve its efforts to combat hate speech and misinformation; failure to comply could lead to huge fines.

In another confusing move, Twitter announced in late November that it would end its policy prohibiting COVID-19 misinformation. Days later, it posted an update claiming that "None of our policies have changed."

On Friday, Musk revealed what he said was the inside story of Twitter's decision in 2020 to limit the spread of a New York Post story about Hunter Biden's laptop.

Twitter initially blocked links to the story on its platform, citing concerns that it contained material obtained through computer hacking. That decision was reversed after it was criticized by then-Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey. Facebook also took actions to limit the story's spread.

No OPEC+ oil shakeup as Russian price cap stirs uncertainty

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)—The Saudi-led OPEC oil cartel and allied producers including Russia did not change their targets for shipping oil to the global economy amid uncertainty about the impact of new Western sanctions against Russia that could take significant amounts of oil off the market.

The decision at a meeting of oil ministers Sunday comes a day ahead of the planned start of two measures aimed at hitting Russia's oil earnings in response to its invasion of Ukraine. Those are: a European Union boycott of most Russian oil and a price cap of $60 per barrel on Russian exports imposed by the EU and the Group of Seven democracies.

It is not yet clear how much Russian oil the two sanctions measures could take off the global market, which would tighten supply and drive up prices. The world's No. 2 oil producer has been able to reroute much, but not all, of its former Europe shipments to customers in India, China and Turkey.

The impact of the price cap is also up in the air because Russia has said it could simply halt deliveries to countries that observe the limit. But analysts say the country would likely also find ways to evade the cap for some shipments.

On the other side, oil has been trading at lower prices on fears that coronavirus outbreaks and China's strict zero-COVID restrictions would reduce demand for fuel in one of the world's major economies. Concerns about recessions in the U.S. and Europe also raise the prospect of lower demand for gasoline and other fuel made from crude.

That uncertainty is the reason the OPEC+ alliance gave in October for a slashing production by 2 million barrels per day starting in November, a cut that remains in effect. Analysts say that took less than the full amount off the market because OPEC+ members already can't meet their full production quotas.

World

Warnock, Walker: Starkly different choices for Black voters

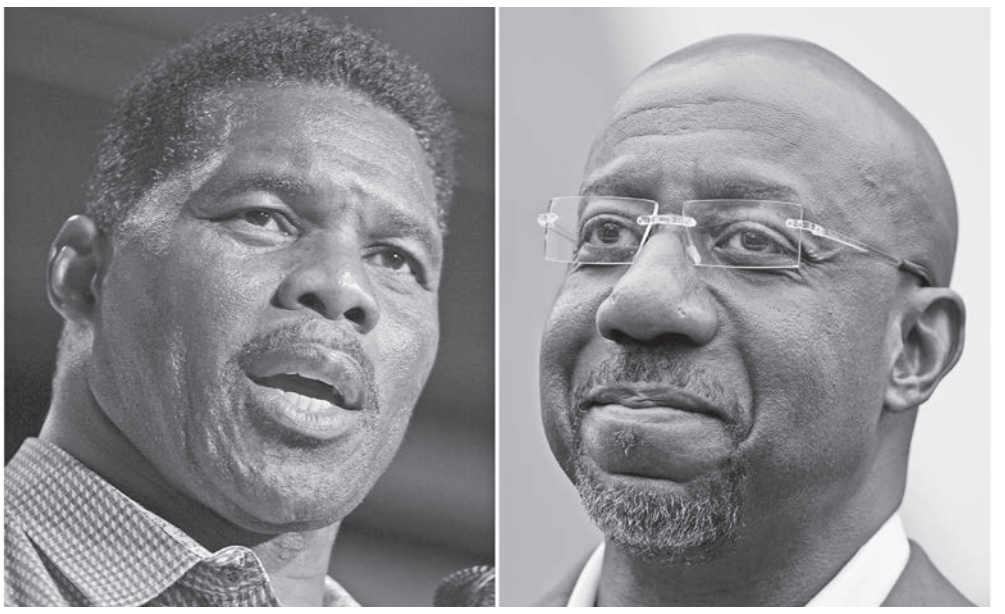
ATLANTA (AP)—Raphael Warnock is the first Black U.S. senator from Georgia, having broken the color barrier for one of the original 13 states with a special election victory in January 2021, almost 245 years after the nation's founding.

Now he hopes to add another distinction by winning a full six-year term in a Tuesday runoff. Standing in the way is another Black man, Republican challenger Herschel Walker.

Both men have common upbringings in the Deep South in the wake of the civil rights movement and would make history as the first Black person elected from Georgia to a full Senate term. Yet Warnock and Walker have cut different paths and offer clearly opposing visions for the country, including on race and racism.

Black voters say the choice is stark: Warnock, the senior minister of Martin Luther King's Atlanta church, echoes traditional liberal notions of the Black experience; and Walker, a University of Georgia football icon, speaks the language of white cultural conservatism and mocks Warnock's interpretations of King, among other matters.

"Republicans seem to have thought they could put up Herschel Walker and confuse Black folks," said Bryce Berry, president of Georgia's Young Democrats chapter and a senior at Morehouse College, a historically Black campus where both King and Warnock graduated.



AP

This combination of photos shows Herschel Walker, Republican candidate for U.S. Senate for Georgia, on May 23, 2022, in Athens, Ga., left, and Democratic nominee for U.S. Senate Sen. Raphael Warnock on Nov. 10, 2022, in Atlanta.

Standing beneath a campus statue of King, Berry continued: "We are not confused."

Other Black voters raised questions about Walker's past — his false claims about his business and professional accomplishments, instances of violence against his ex-wife — and the way he stumbles over some public policy discussions as a candidate. Some said they believe GOP leaders are taking advantage of Walker's fame as a beloved Heisman Trophy winner and national champion running back for the Georgia Bulldogs.

"How can you let yourself be used that way as a Black person?" asked Angela Heard, a state employee from Jonesboro. "I think you should be better in touch with your people instead of being a crony for someone."

Even some Black conservatives who back Walker lament his candidacy as a missed opportunity to expand Republicans' reach to a key part of the electorate that remains overwhelmingly Democratic.

"I don't think Herschel Walker has enough relatable life experience to the average Black American for them to identify with him," said Avion Abreu, a 34-year-old realtor who lives in Marietta and has supported Walker since the GOP primary campaign.

Warnock led Walker by about 37,000 votes out of almost 4 million cast in the November general election. AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 3,200 voters in the state, showed that Warnock won 90% of Black voters. Walker, meanwhile, won 68% of white voters.

VoteCast data in the 2021 runoff suggested that Black voters helped fuel Warnock's victory over then-Sen. Kelly Loeffler, comprising almost a third of that electorate, slightly more than the Black share of the 2020 general electorate.

The senator's campaign has said since then that he'd have to assemble a multiracial coalition, including many moderate white voters, to win reelection in a midterm election year. But they've not disputed that a strong Black turnout would be necessary regardless.

The Republican National Committee has answered with its own uptick in Black voter outreach, opening community centers in several heavily Black areas of the state. But the general election results raise questions about the effectiveness, at least for Walker.

Abreu said she believes Walker still can win the runoff but has to do it with the usual, overwhelmingly white GOP coalition moved by party loyalty and the 60-year-old candidate's emphasis on cultural issues. His campaign, she said, "hasn't told the full story of Herschel's life and related that to people, with an explanation of how he is going to help them."

Indeed, Walker and Warnock share their stories as Black men quite differently.

Warnock doesn't often use phrases like "the Black church" or "the Black experience," but infuses those institutions and ideas into his arguments.

Supreme Court weighs 'most important case' on democracy

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court is about to confront a new elections case, a Republican-led challenge asking the justices for a novel ruling that could significantly increase the power of state lawmakers over elections for Congress and the presidency.

The court is set to hear arguments Wednesday in a case from North Carolina, where Republican efforts to draw congressional districts heavily in their favor were blocked by a Democratic majority on the state Supreme Court because the GOP map violated the state constitution.

A court-drawn map produced seven seats for each party in last month's midterm elections in highly competitive North Carolina.

The question for the justices is whether the U.S. Constitution's provision giving state legislatures the power to make the rules about the "times, places and manner" of congressional elections cuts state courts out of the process.

"This is the single most important case on American democracy — and for American democracy — in the nation's history," said former federal judge Michael Luttig, a prominent conservative who has joined the legal team defending the North Carolina court decision.

The Republican leaders of North Carolina's legislature told the Supreme Court that the Constitution's "carefully drawn lines place the regulation of federal elections in the hands of state legislatures, Congress and no one else."

Three conservative justices already have voiced some support for the idea that the state court had improperly taken powers given by the Constitution when it comes to federal elections. A fourth has written approvingly about limiting the power of state courts in this area.

But the Supreme Court has never invoked what is known as the independent state legislature theory. It was, though, mentioned in a separate opinion by three conservatives in the Bush v. Gore case that settled the 2000 presidential election.

If the court were to recognize it now, opponents of the concept argue, the effects could be much broader than just redistricting.

The most robust ruling for North Carolina Republicans could undermine more than 170 state constitutional provisions, over 650 state laws delegating authority to make election policies to state and local officials, and thousands of regulations down to the location of polling places, according to the Brennan Center for Justice at the New York University School of Law.

Luttig, who advised former Vice President Mike Pence that he had no authority to reject electoral votes following the 2020 election, is among several prominent conservatives and Republicans who have lined up against the broad assertion that legislatures can't be challenged in state courts when they make decisions about federal elections, including congressional redistricting.

That group includes former California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, law professor Steven Calabresi, a founder of the conservative Federalist Society and Benjamin Ginsberg, a longtime lawyer for Republican candidates and the party.

"Unfortunately, because of ongoing and widespread efforts to sow distrust and spread disinformation, confidence in our elections is at a low ebb," Ginsberg wrote in a Supreme Court filing. "The version of the independent state legislature theory advanced by Petitioners in this case threatens to make a bad situation much worse, exacerbating the current moment of political polarization and further undermining confidence in our elections."

ACROSS THE NATION

Trump rebuked for call to suspend Constitution over election

WASHINGTON (AP)—Former President Donald Trump faced rebuke Sunday from officials in both parties after calling for the "termination" of parts of the Constitution over his lie that the 2020 election was stolen.

Trump, who announced last month that he is running again for president, made the claim over the weekend on his Truth Social media platform.

"A Massive Fraud of this type and magnitude allows for the termination of all rules, regulations, and articles, even those found in the Constitution," he wrote. "Our great 'Founders' did not want, and would not condone, False & Fraudulent Elections!"

Incoming House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries on Sunday described Trump's statement as strange and extreme and said Republicans will have to make a choice whether to continue embracing Trump's anti-democratic views.

Supreme Court taking up clash of religion and gay rights

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court is hearing the case Monday of a Christian graphic artist who objects to designing wedding websites for gay couples, a dispute that's the latest clash of religion and gay rights to land at the highest court.

The designer and her supporters say that ruling against her would force artists—from painters and photographers to writers and musicians—to do work that is against their faith. Her opponents, meanwhile, say that if she wins, a range of businesses will be able to discriminate, refusing to serve Black customers, Jewish or Muslim people, interracial or interfaith couples or immigrants, among others.

The case comes at a time when the court is dominated 6-3 by conservatives and following a series of cases in which the justices have sided with religious plaintiffs. It also comes as, across the street from the court, lawmakers in Congress are finalizing a landmark bill protecting same-sex marriage.

The bill, which also protects interracial marriage, steadily gained momentum following the high court's decision earlier this year to end constitutional protections for abortion. That decision to overturn the 1973 Roe v. Wade case prompted questions about whether the court — now that it is more conservative — might also overturn its 2015 decision declaring a nationwide right to same-sex marriage. Justice Clarence Thomas explicitly said that decision should also be reconsidered.

Shootings at power substations cause North Carolina outages

CARTHAGE, N.C. (AP)—Two power substations in a North Carolina county were damaged by gunfire in what is being investigated as a criminal act, causing damage that could take days to repair and leaving tens of thousands of people without electricity, authorities said Sunday.

In response to ongoing outages, which began just after 7 p.m. Saturday across Moore County, officials announced a state of emergency that included a curfew from 9 p.m. Sunday to 5 a.m. Monday. Also, county schools will be closed Monday.

"An attack like this on critical infrastructure is a serious, intentional crime and I expect state and federal authorities to thoroughly investigate and bring those responsible to justice," Gov. Roy Cooper wrote on Twitter.

Asia

Indonesia's Mt. Semeru eruption buries homes, damages bridge

SUMBERWULUH, Indonesia (AP)—Improved weather conditions Monday allowed rescuers to resume evacuation efforts and a search for possible victims after the highest volcano on Indonesia's most densely populated island erupted, triggered by monsoon rains.

Mount Semeru in Lumajang district in East Java province spewed thick columns of ash more than 1,500 meters (nearly 5,000 feet) into the sky Sunday. Villages and nearby towns were blanketed with falling ash, blocking out the sun, but no casualties have been reported.

Hundreds of rescuers were deployed Monday in the worst-hit villages of Sumberwuluh and Supiturang, where houses and mosques were buried to their rooftops by tons of volcanic debris.

Heavy rains had eroded and finally collapsed the lava dome atop the 3,676-meter (12,060-foot) volcano, causing an avalanche of blistering gas and lava down its slopes toward a nearby river. Searing gas raced down the sides of the mountain, smothering entire villages and destroying a bridge that had just been rebuilt after a powerful eruption last year.

AP

Villagers stand on an area covered in volcanic ash as Mount Semeru looms in the background in Kajar Kuning village in Lumajang, East Java, Indonesia, Monday, Dec. 5, 2022.

Semeru's last major eruption was in December 2021, when it blew up with a fury that left 51 people dead in villages that were buried in layers of mud. Several hundred others suffered serious burns and the eruption forced the evacuation of more than 10,000 people. The government moved about 2,970 houses out of the danger zone, including from Sumberwuluh village.

Lumajang district chief Thoriqul Haq said villagers who are still haunted by last year's eruption fled on their own when they heard the mountain start to rumble early Sunday, so that "casualties could be avoided."

"They have learned an important lesson on how to avoid the danger of eruption," he said while inspecting a damaged bridge in Kajar Kuning hamlet.

He said nearly 2,000 people escaped to emergency shelters at several schools, but many were returned to their homes Monday to tend their livestock and protect their property.

Increased volcanic activity Sunday afternoon prompted authorities to widen the danger zone to 8 kilometers (5 miles) from the crater, and scientists raised the volcano's alert level to the highest, said Hendra Gunawan, who heads the Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation Center.

China eases controls, gives no sign when 'zero COVID' ends

BEIJING (AP)—China is easing some of the world's most stringent anti-virus controls and authorities say new variants are weaker. But they have yet to say when they might end a "zero-COVID" strategy that confines millions of people to their homes and set off protests and demands for President Xi Jinping to resign.

On Monday, commuters in Beijing and at least 16 other cities were allowed to board buses and subways without a virus test in the previous 48 hours for the first time in months. Industrial centers including Guangzhou near Hong Kong have reopened markets and businesses and lifted most curbs on movement while keeping restrictions on neighborhoods with infections.

The government announced plans last week to vaccinate millions of people in their 70s and 80s, a condition for ending "zero- COVID" restrictions that keep most visitors out of China and have disrupted manufacturing and global trade.

That spurred hopes for a quick end to "zero COVID." But health experts and economists warn it will be mid-2023 and possibly 2024 before vaccination rates are high enough and hospitals are prepared to handle a possible rash of infections.

"China is not ready for a fast reopening yet," Morgan Stanley economists said in a report Monday. "We expect lingering containment measures. ... Restrictions could still tighten dynamically in lower-tier cities should hospitalizations surge."

The changes follow protests demanding an end to "zero COVID" but are in line with Communist Party promises earlier to reduce disruption by easing quarantine and other restrictions. The changes have been highly publicized in a possible effort to mollify public anger, but there is no indication whether any might have been made in response to protests in Shanghai and other cities.

China is the only major country still trying to stamp out transmission while the United States and others relax restrictions and try to live with the virus that has killed at least 6.6 million people and infected almost 650 million.

The protests began Nov. 25 after at least 10 people died in a fire in an apartment building in Urumqi in the northwest. Authorities denied suggestions firefighters or victims were blocked by locked doors or other anti-virus controls. But the disaster became a focus for public frustration.

Ahead of the protests, the Communist Party promised to make "zero COVID" less costly and disruptive but said it was sticking to the overall containment strategy.

The party earlier announced updates to the strategy to make it more focused. Authorities began suspending access to buildings or neighborhoods with an infection instead of whole cities. But a spike in cases starting in October prompted areas across China to close schools and confine families to cramped apartments for weeks at a time.

Authorities say they are "further optimizing" controls and warn the country needs to stay alert.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

US intel chief thinking 'optimistically' for Ukraine forces

KYIV, Ukraine (AP)—The head of U.S. intelligence says fighting in Russia's war in Ukraine is running at a "reduced tempo" and suggests Ukrainian forces could have brighter prospects in coming months.

Avril Haines alluded to past allegations by some that Russian President Vladimir Putin's advisers could be shielding him from bad news — for Russia — about war developments, and said he "is becoming more informed of the challenges that the military faces in Russia."

"But it's still not clear to us that he has a full picture of at this stage of just how challenged they are," Haines, the U.S. director of national intelligence, said Saturday at the Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California.

She said her team was "seeing a kind of a reduced tempo already of the conflict" and looking ahead expects both sides will look to refit, resupply, and reconstitute for a possible Ukrainian counter-offensive in the spring.

"But we actually have a fair amount of skepticism as to whether or not the Russians will be in fact prepared to do that," said Haines, speaking to NBC's Andrea Mitchell. "And I think more optimistically for the Ukrainians in that time frame."

On Sunday, the British Ministry of Defense, in its latest intelligence estimate, pointed to new signs from an independent Russian media outlet that public support in Russia for the military campaign was "falling significantly."

Meduza said it obtained a recent confidential opinion survey conducted by the Federal Protection Service, which is in charge of guarding the Kremlin and providing security to top government officials.

Iran morality police status unclear after 'closure' comment

CAIRO (AP)—An Iranian lawmaker said Sunday that Iran's government is "paying attention to the people's real demands," state media reported, a day after a top official suggested that the country's morality police whose conduct helped trigger months of protests has been shut down.

The role of the morality police, which enforces veiling laws, came under scrutiny after a detainee, 22-year-old Mahsa Amini, died in its custody in mid-September. Amini had been held for allegedly violating the Islamic Republic's strict dress codes. Her death unleashed a wave of unrest that has grown into calls for the downfall of Iran's clerical rulers.

Iran's chief prosecutor Mohamed Jafar Montazeri said on Saturday the morality police "had been closed," the semi-official news agency ISNA reported. The agency did not provide details, and state media hasn't reported such a purported decision.

In a report carried by ISNA on Sunday, lawmaker Nezamoddin Mousavi signaled a less confrontational approach toward the protests.

"Both the administration and parliament insisted that paying attention to the people's demand that is mainly economic is the best way for achieving stability and confronting the riots," he said, following a closed meeting with several senior Iranian officials, including President Ebrahim Raisi.

Mousavi did not address the reported closure of the morality police.

Flash flood kills nine at church gathering in South Africa

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—At least nine people died and eight others were missing in South Africa after a flash flood swept away members of a church congregation along the Jukskei River in Johannesburg, rescue officials said Sunday.

The dead and missing were all part of the congregation, which was conducting religious rituals along the river on Saturday, officials said. Rescue workers reported finding the bodies of two victims that day and another seven bodies when the search and recovery mission resumed Sunday morning.

The teams were interviewing people from the congregation to establish how many others were unaccounted for.

Religious groups frequently gather along the Jukskei River, which runs past townships such as Alexandra in the east of Johannesburg, for baptisms and ritual cleansing.

Johannesburg Emergency Services spokesman Robert Mulaudzi said Sunday that officials had warned residents about the dangers of conducting the rituals along the river.

"We have been receiving a lot of rain on the city of Johannesburg in the last three months, and most of the river streams are now full. Our residents, especially congregants who normally practice these kinds of rituals, will be tempted to go to these river streams," Mulaudzi said during a news briefing.

"Our message for them is to exercise caution as and when they conduct these rituals," he added.

Amazon loses 10% of its vegetation in nearly four decades

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—The Amazon region has lost 10% of its native vegetation, mostly tropical rainforest, in almost four decades, an area roughly the size of Texas, a new report says.

From 1985 to 2021, the deforested area surged from 490,000 square kilometers (190,000 square miles) to 1,250,000 square kilometers (482,000 square miles), unprecedented destruction in the Amazon, according to the Amazon Network of Georeferenced Socio-Environmental Information, or Raisg.

The numbers are calculated from an annual satellite monitoring since 1985 from Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, Venezuela, Suriname, Guyana and French Guiana. The report is a collaboration between Raisg and MapBiomas, a network of Brazilian nonprofits, universities and technology startups.

"The losses have been enormous, virtually irreversible and with no expectation of a turnaround," said a statement Friday by Raisg, a consortium of civil society organizations from the region's countries. "The data signals a yellow light and gives a sense of urgency to the need for a coordinated, decisive and compelling international action."

Brazil, which holds about two-thirds of the Amazon, also leads the destruction. In almost four decades, 19% of its rainforest has been destroyed, due mainly to cattle ranching expansion supported by the opening of roads. The country accounted for 84% of all forest destruction in the period.

Almost half of Brazil's carbon emissions comes from deforestation. The destruction is so vast that the eastern Amazon has ceased to be a carbon sink, or absorber, for the Earth and has become a carbon source, according to a study published in 2021 in the journal Nature.

Overdrive

Wicked 600-hp Acura NSX Type S saves the best for last

By HENRY PAYNE
THE DETROIT NEWS

ACURA/TNS

The 2022 Acura NSX Type S has a 3.5-liter, twin-turbo V-6 engine with three electric-motor hybrid assist.

The Acura NSX is galloping off into the sunset in style. For its last model year, the NSX gets a Type S performance model with 600 horsepower, carbon-fiber roof, sticky Pirelli P Zero PZ4 tires and quicker shifting.

Awesome. But can we talk styling?

As one of world's rare mid-engine supercars—and one of only two Made in the USA (the other is the Corvette C8 in Kentucky)—the NSX's conservative wardrobe always appeared a mismatch for the sinewy, all-wheel-drive hybrid turbo-V6 sci-fi beast underneath.

Walk up to a C8 and its shard-like headlights stare at you hungrily. Come across a Lamborghini Huracan and it looks like Smaug the Dragon on the verge of burning down Middle Earth. The NSX? It has the face of a Honda Accord.

Not the Type S. This thing looks wicked. For its last hurrah, Acura has remade the front and rear clips of its supercar for proper menace. The headlights—12 LED projectors glowing inside—are now visually separated from the gaping grille and underlined by gaping gills. A huge diffuser hangs out back.

Now that's a proper supercar. Like an alien insectoid come to earth to consume all our asphalt roads.

Type S and I did a lot of consuming.

Over northern Oakland County's twisty lake roads, I nailed the throttle and the V-6 howled with pleasure. Slinging NSX around a 180-degree Telegraph Road turn, I stomped the gas. More howling. Out of a stoplight on a vacant rural two-lane, I initiated launch control for a 2.9-second 0-60 mph sprint. Hooowwwwl!

With 492 pound-feet of thrust, the hybrid all-wheel-drive drivetrain is a joy. Despite the resulting 3,900 pounds of girth, the supercar's low center of gravity makes it feel sucked to the road. It's learned at the feet of the NSX GT3 race car (still competitive on the IMSA circuit). Given that it was introduced in 2017, the NSX's interior design is dated given the relentless industry electronics race—but also since NSX's signature cyclops driver mode button and trigger shifter are being phased out in other Acura/Honda products. But it's still unusual, a reminder of the NSX's ambitions when it was rolled out as a $160,000 hybrid supercar with tech previously found on the $1 million Porsche 918.

Despite its technological prowess, NSX was a sales disappointment, moving just 2,548 copies globally over its five-year run. Though cheap for the hybrid supercar class, it had to compete against comparably priced cyborgs like the flat-6-fired $160K Porsche 911 GT3. Ohhhh, knees. Getting. Weak.

But while the stiff, wailing 911 GT3 feels like it wants to race all day long, the NSX Type S is a lovely daily driver, starting with its Toyota Prius-like preference to sneak out my driveway on battery power in Quiet mode.

Dial up cyclops to Sport, Sport Plus and Track modes, and the engine tone gets sharper, the magnetic dampers firmer. Two personalities, one supercar. A St. Louis pal had to trade in his 911 GT3 after a year for a 911 Targa because he wanted more comfort.

Just don't plan on going too far in the Type S. Its tiny 4.4 cubic feet of trunk space won't hold much more than toiletries for a date weekend. Frunk-equipped peers like the McLaren GT and 911 are more accommodating.

My friend Kevin has owned everything from Lambo Aventadors to Ferrari F8s, and he fell in love with the Type S.

"I like this better than the Ferrari," he said while driving over the oxcart-rough roads of Southfield. In Track mode, the Type S porpoised over the bumps. Then we dialed it back to Sport, and the car was more domesticated—the ferocious, battery-assisted torque always at the ready when needed.

Just weeks after my jaunt in a loaded $185,000 Gotham Gray Matte Type S, Chevrolet introduced the performance version of its Made in America supercar—the Corvette Z06.

The 670-horse, V8-powered Z06 has an 8,000-RPM exhaust note from the gods, 2.6-second 0-60 mph time, Stealth mode and 12.6 cubic feet of cargo room. For $166K loaded ($127K base). Oh.

The 'Vette will probably sell as many copies in a year as NSX sold in its lifetime. Which speaks to why Acura couldn't translate its supercar into super sales. Still, the halo-car NSX has transformed Acura back into a performance brand. Everything from the RDX SUV to the entry-level Integra now carries its DNA.

And with its final, 2022 run of 350 copies, NSX has finally found its halo. The Type S is the best-looking NSX ever.

NUTS & BOLTS

- **2022 Acura NSX Type S**
- **Vehicle type:** Mid-engine, all-wheel drive two-passenger sports car
- **Price:** $171,495 base ($192,495 as tested)
- **Powerplant:** 3.5-liter, twin-turbo V-6 with three electric-motor hybrid assist
- **Power:** 600 combined horsepower, 492 pound-feet of torque
- **Transmission:** Nine-speed dual-clutch
- **Performance:** 0-60 mph, 2.9 seconds (Car & Driver); top speed, 191 mph (mfr.)
- **Weight:** 3,898 pounds
- **Fuel economy:** EPA 21 mpg city / 22 mpg highway / 21 combined
- **Report card**
- **Highs:** Best-looking NSX made; supercar performance for under $200K
- **Lows:** Small cargo space; less performance than cheaper Corvette Z06
- **Overall:** 3 stars

Warranty woes

Q: I have a 2008 Chrysler Town and Country that I purchased new. I also purchased the Chrysler Lifetime Maximum warranty. The ABS, BRAKE, ESP/BAS, ANTI-SKID warning lights came on. My dealership inspected the vehicle and tried to order a new sensor. They notified me that one was not available, either new or aftermarket. This was why I purchased the lifetime warranty. Ugh! My service writer said I could drive it, but ABS will not work and that Chrysler would probably have to "total" the vehicle and offer me market value to satisfy the warranty. Vehicle looks and runs like new. I'm still driving it and would like to for some time to come.

W.T., Elgin, Illinois

A: The service writer must not be aware that ABS wheel speed sensors are readily available in the aftermarket from a variety of manufacturers and a variety of auto parts stores. Yes, perhaps the original equipment part is unavailable from the dealership.

■■■

Q: I like to shift my automatic transmission into neutral when I am stopped at traffic lights if I am on level road. Is this a good practice? It gives my right leg a break from not holding the brake pedal down. I am careful not to let my truck roll. What are pros and cons?

J.S., Las Vegas

A: The practice neither helps nor hurts. But there could be issues if you need to accelerate away from a vehicle about to rear-end you. If you do get hit, leaving your foot off the brakes could also cause your car to crash into the one in front of you. Your insurance company may consider this a collision when you file a claim and cite you as being at fault. If your leg needs a rest, shift into park.

■■■

Q: My car maintenance service suggests I get an oil change every 3-4 months assuming I drive about 10,000 miles between changes. So the reminder sticker they put on my windshield shows that my next oil change was due last March at 53,300 miles. Since I drive only about 5,000 miles per year and my milage is only 51,300, I haven't changed the oil yet. My car is a 2014 Toyota Camry SE that uses synthetic oil. Do you recommend changing the oil based on time since last oil change or based on mileage?

S.A., Las Vegas

A: Although they can be a helpful reminder for some motorists, I personally consider those stickers marketing tools to drive repeat business. Follow the maintenance schedule in your owner's manual for both time and mileage or the oil change reminder onboard the car.

■■■

Q: I have a 2020 RAV4, and my daughter has a 2018-ish hybrid version. We both have noticed that the windows do not defog well in the winter, especially in the back seat, a problem here in Minnesota for several months a year. When I took mine to the dealership last winter (first winter with it), they told me it was because the carpet was wet. This year on a cool morning in early October, I noticed it again and we'd had no rain or snow. This past week with the snow, I did not drive the car so there's still no moisture. And still the windows fogged up last night. Do you have any tips for me? The only way I've found to help so that I can see to safely drive is to have the fan on full blast and the back seat windows cracked open. None of which is ideal.

L.D., Minneapolis

What do you think is the quickest way to warm the car cabin? Set the controls to recirculate? Nope. Recirculated air picks up moisture not only from wet carpet, but from human breathing. With every exhale, we add moisture to our environment. Select the fresh air setting on your HVAC controls and I have a hunch you will clearly see good results. You have already proven better results with fresh air from the rear window.

MOTORMOUTH

By BOB WEBER
Tribune News Service

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. Weber's work has appeared in professional trade magazines and various consumer publications including Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.

Life & Style

Infowars host Alex Jones files for personal bankruptcy

By DAVE COLLINS and JILL BLEED
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Infowars host Alex Jones filed for personal bankruptcy protection Friday in Texas, citing debts that include nearly $1.5 billion he has been ordered to pay to families who sued him over his conspiracy theories about the Sandy Hook school massacre.

Jones filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection in Houston. His filing listed $1 billion to $10 billion in liabilities and $1 million to $10 million in assets.

Jones acknowledged the filing on his Infowars broadcast, saying the case will prove that he's broke and asking viewers to shop on his website to help keep the show on the air.

"I'm officially out of money, personally," Jones said. "It's all going to be filed. It's all going to be public. And you will see that Alex Jones has almost no cash."

Jones

Jones, who sells dietary supplements and other items on his Infowars site and promotes them during his shows, said he would not be commenting further on the bankruptcy.

For years, Jones described the 2012 massacre as a hoax. A Connecticut jury in October awarded victims' families $965 million in compensatory damages, and a judge later tacked on another $473 million in punitive damages. Earlier in the year, a Texas jury awarded the parents of a child killed in the shooting $49 million in damages.

The bankruptcy filing temporarily halted all proceedings in the Connecticut case. A judge was forced to cancel a hearing scheduled for Friday on the Sandy Hook families' request to secure the assets of Jones and his company to help pay the more than $1.4 billion in damages awarded there.

Chris Mattei, an attorney for the Sandy Hook families in the Connecticut case, criticized the bankruptcy filing.

"Like every other cowardly move Alex Jones has made, this bankruptcy will not work," Mattei said in a statement. "The bankruptcy system does not protect anyone who engages in intentional and egregious attacks on others, as Mr. Jones did. The American judicial system will hold Alex Jones accountable, and we will never stop working to enforce the jury's verdict."

An attorney representing Jones in the bankruptcy case did not immediately return a message seeking comment.

In the Texas and Connecticut cases, some relatives of the 20 children and six adults killed in the school shooting testified that they were threatened and harassed for years by people who believed the lies told on Jones' show. One parent testified that conspiracy theorists urinated on his 7-year-old son's grave and threatened to dig up the coffin.

Erica Lafferty, the daughter of slain Sandy Hook principal Dawn Hochsprung, testified that people mailed rape threats to her house.

Jones has laughed at the awards on his Infowars show, saying he has less than $2 million to his name and won't be able to pay such high amounts. Those comments contradicted the testimony of a forensic economist at the Texas trial, who said Jones and his company Free Speech Systems have a combined net worth as high as $270 million. Free Speech Systems is also seeking bankruptcy protection.

'Wakanda Forever' is No. 1 for 4th straight weekend

NEW YORK (AP)—"Black Panther: Wakanda Forever" kept the box-office crown for the fourth straight weekend, and the comic holiday thriller "Violent Night" debuted with $13.3 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. But the biggest talking point on the weekend was a movie conspicuously absent from theateßrs.

Had Netflix kept Rian Johnson's whodunit sequel "Glass Onion: A Knives Out Mystery" in theaters, it would have been one of the weekend's top draws. Last weekend, the streamer—in its first such pact with North America's top chains—released "Glass Onion" in about 600 theaters. While significantly less than the 4,000-plus theaters most big movies open in, the Netflix film reportedly grossed about $15 million—an enviable total for a medium scaled release.

Netflix declined to release ticket sales and pulled "Glass Onion" on Tuesday, preferring to keep its release limited to a one-week sneak-peak theatrical run before debuting on the streaming service Dec. 23. Netflix's focus, its executives have said, is driving subscribers to its streaming service. On Wednesday, Reed Hastings, chief executive of Netflix, acknowledged the company left "lots" of money on the table in the move.

So instead of feasting on "Glass Onion," as ticket buyers did after Thanksgiving in 2019 when Lionsgate released "Knives Out," moviegoers were fed mostly leftovers this weekend.

For four weeks, the Walt Disney Co.'s "Wakanda Forever" has ruled the box office. Ryan Coogler's Marvel movie has totaled $733 million globally, including $339 million in overseas sales.

"Violent Night" was the only new wide release in cinemas. Starring David Harbour as a not-so-saintly Saint Nick, the Universal release got off to a good start. "Violent Night," which earned a B+ CinemaScore from audiences, cost about $20 million to make.

Though "Avatar: The Way of Water" and other holiday releases like "Puss in Boots 2," "Babylon" and "I Wanna Dance With Somebody" loom in the coming weeks, theaters continue to see fewer films in wide release than they did pre-pandemic. David A. Gross, who publishes the box-office subscription newsletter FranchiseRe, says that while there were 58 franchise films released in 2019, there have been only 32 in 2022.

St. Edward's Crown moved out of tower ahead of coronation

AP
In this photo provided by the Royal Collection Trust/© His Majesty King Charles III 2022 on Saturday, Dec 3, 2022 a photo of the St Edward's Crown which will be worn by King Charles III on his Coronation on May 6, 2023.

LONDON (AP)—St. Edward's Crown, the centerpiece of the Crown Jewels viewed by millions of people every year at the Tower of London, has been moved to an undisclosed location for modification in preparation for the coronation of King Charles III next year.

The move was kept secret for security reasons until the operation was complete, Buckingham Palace said in a statement Saturday. The palace provided no details and didn't say where the modification work would take place.

Charles will be crowned on May 6 at Westminster Abbey in a ceremony that will embrace the past but look to the modern world after the 70-year reign of the late Queen Elizabeth II. The Imperial State Crown will also be used during the service.

Versions of St. Edward's Crown are believed to have been used by monarchs since the 11th century.

The current crown was made for Charles II in 1661, as a replacement for the original, which was melted down in 1649 after the House of Commons abolished the monarchy and declared a commonwealth during the English Civil War. The original was thought to date back to Edward the Confessor, who reigned in 1042-1066.

Serial cheater boyfriend is up to his old tricks

DEAR ABBY: I have been with my boyfriend, "Robert," for 10 years. We live together, and he helps me raise my preteen daughter. Recently, Robert has decided that he is "entitled to privacy." He has locked me out of his computer and phone and refuses to share his passwords.

Some history: Robert has cheated on me more than 20 times in the past, with an almost-encounter happening as recently as three months ago, thwarted only after I saw some text messages on his phone. Last week, I discovered that he used the search term "sex" on a website that's notorious for facilitating random hookups. I was furious.

Robert is now using my reaction to justify locking me out of his devices. I am finally putting my foot down and telling him this is the red line for me -- if he doesn't allow me unrestricted access to his devices, I can no longer be in a relationship with him. He is still refusing, so we are now at an impasse. Am I crazy?

LIVID IN LAS VEGAS

DEAR LIVID: You ARE crazy if you stay in a relationship with someone who has not only cheated on you more than 20 times in the past, but is now hell-bent on continuing. You know what he is doing. You know he won't change. Access to his passwords isn't the answer. ENOUGH, already!

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I'm a woman who is all for greater acceptance of LGBTQ people, but I wish strangers wouldn't assume an intimate relationship exists when it doesn't. On more than one occasion, I have been with a woman friend, and the nurse or proprietor has said something that implies we are "partners." We're not! We're just friends assisting each other or having a meal together. It's embarrassing to be identified as something we're not. There's also no comeback to correct the misidentification that wouldn't make the situation worse. My plea is that everyone be treated courteously, without making assumptions. What do you think, Abby?

STRAIGHT, BUT NOT NARROW

DEAR STRAIGHT: I agree with your sentiments. It is presumptuous to assume that because two people of the same sex are socializing that they're a couple. However, there is an effective response to correct someone who assumes you and your friend are a gay couple. All you have to do is smile and say three magic words, preferably in unison: "We're just friends." Consider it an opportunity to educate.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: My daughter went to visit her in-laws with her husband and two children. Her mother-in-law is an amazing cook. While they were having dinner, my daughter said to her, "This is so delicious, I would love to have the recipe." Her mother-in-law replied, "My recipes are for family only." My daughter was deeply hurt, and their relationship has never been the same. What would be the best way to handle this cutting remark and help their relationship move forward?

NOT FAMILY IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR NOT FAMILY: The best way would be for your daughter's husband to tell his mother how hurtful her response was, and for the woman to apologize to your daughter and offer her the recipe because, like it or not, her daughter-in-law IS "family."

■■■■

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

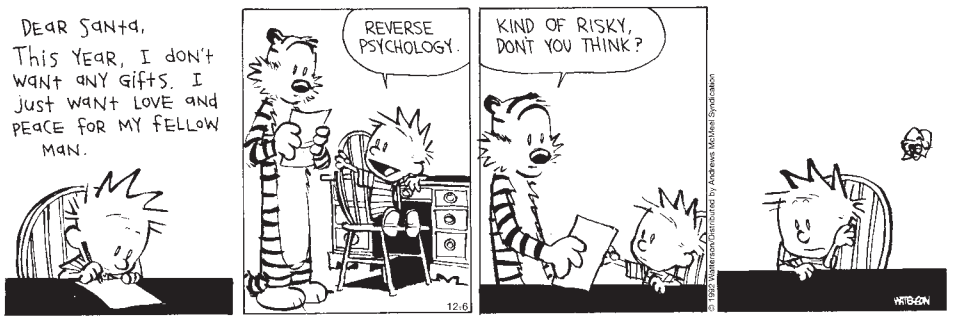
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


DEAR SANTA,
THIS YEAR, I DON'T WANT ANY GIFTS. I JUST WANT LOVE AND PEACE FOR MY FELLOW MAN.
REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY.
KIND OF RISKY, DON'T YOU THINK?
12-6
© 1992 Watterson/Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
WATTERSON

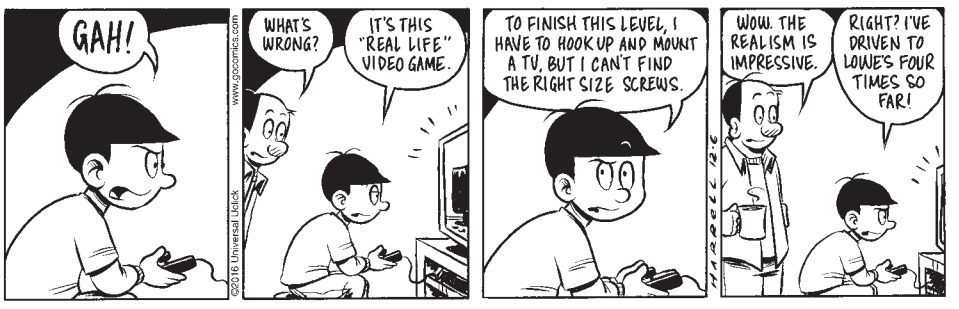
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

REMEMBER, SANTA'S ALWAYS WATCHING YOU
WELL THEN I GUESS WE'D BETTER BE GOOD, ODIE!
THAT IS, UNTIL WE FIND THE HIDDEN SANTA CAM
© 2022 PAWS, INC. All Rights Reserved.
Distributed by Andrews McMeel Syndication
JIM DAVIS 12-6

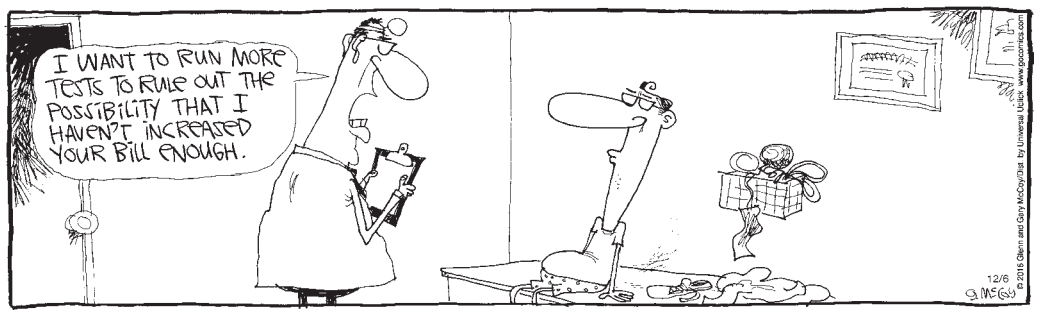
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


GAH!
WHAT'S WRONG?
IT'S THIS "REAL LIFE" VIDEO GAME.
TO FINISH THIS LEVEL, I HAVE TO HOOK UP AND MOUNT A TV, BUT I CAN'T FIND THE RIGHT SIZE SCREWS.
WOW. THE REALISM IS IMPRESSIVE.
RIGHT? I'VE DRIVEN TO LOWE'S FOUR TIMES SO FAR!
©2016 Universal Uclick
www.gocomics.com

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


I WANT TO RUN MORE TESTS TO RULE OUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT I HAVEN'T INCREASED YOUR BILL ENOUGH.
12/6
© 2016 Glenn and Gary McCoy/Dist. by Universal Uclick, www.gocomics.com

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Tater
5 Huck's transport
9 — Lanka
12 London gallery
13 Fencing sword
14 Varnish ingredient
15 Tavern drink
17 Previously
18 Big-screen format
19 Asian noodles
21 Bucking horse
24 Nullify
25 Zero, in tennis
26 Frat party errands
30 Luau instrument
31 Trait carriers
32 "Science Guy" Bill
33 Goes too long
35 Distort
36 Wee
37 Rosters
38 Group of three
40 Tennis ace Sampras
42 Drone
43 Bank account woe
48 Employ
49 Meadows
50 Castle
51 Aachen article
52 Wheel bar
53 Dog's bowlful

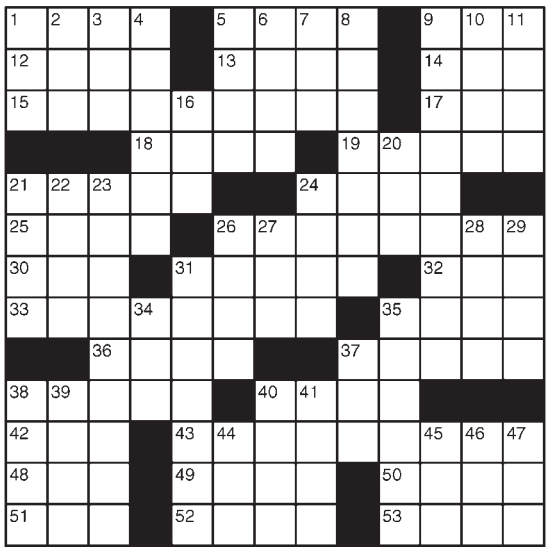
DOWN

1 Norm (Abbr.)
2 Standard
3 Actress Hagen
4 Give meaning to
5 Country great McEntire
6 Pinnacle
7 Service charge
8 Really bratty kids
9 Sure things
10 Fury
11 PC picture
16 Film buff's network
20 Televise
21 Fuzzy image
22 Video-streaming brand
23 Baker's clock
24 Swerve
26 Group of quail
27 Chemical suffix
28 Russian refusal
29 Stitches
31 Canal boat
34 "Diamonds" singer
35 Mountain chain
37 British "Inc."
38 Dull sound of impact
39 Stratagem
40 Bell sound
41 Gaelic
44 Puzzle
45 ISP giant
46 Dandy guy
47 Ring decision

Solution time: 22 mins.

C	L	A	M	■	B	A	A	■	A	B	B	A
R	I	G	A	T	O	N	I	■	G	U	A	C
O	N	T	H	E	A	I	R	■	E	R	T	E
■	■	■	L	A	T	■	H	I	N	G	E	S
G	A	M	E	R	■	W	E	N	D	■	■	■
E	V	E	R	■	A	R	A	M	A	I	C	■
D	I	M	■	D	I	O	D	E	■	P	A	D
■	D	E	P	A	R	T	S	■	T	O	R	E
■	■	■	H	Y	D	E	■	C	A	D	D	Y
C	A	R	I	O	U	■	N	O	N	■	■	■
O	R	E	L	■	C	L	E	A	N	A	I	R
W	E	A	L	■	T	O	I	L	E	T	T	E
L	A	D	Y	■	S	O	N	■	R	O	S	A

Yesterday's answer 12-6



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Lindsay Price, 46; Judd Apatow, 55; Tom Hulce, 69; JoBeth Williams, 74.

Happy Birthday: Evaluate your current situation and consider what you can do to stabilize your life. Establish boundaries, and make your voice heard regarding your terms and what you are capable of and willing to do this year. Make your positive, energetic nature carry you from start to finish, and you will have an impact on those who work by your side. Your numbers are 5, 12, 24, 29, 33, 41, 48.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* You'll be a sponge for information, so take note of what others have to offer and use the information in a unique way that will make you stand out and receive praise for your contributions. Trust your intelligence and judgment. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* You can lend a helping hand, but not at the expense of putting off your responsibilities. Refuse to let anyone guilt you into something you don't have time to do or shouldn't. Don't let others control your every move. 3 stars

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Negotiate on your behalf. You know what you want better than anyone, so speak up and make your voice heard. A partnership requires structure to ensure that balance and equality are maintained. Make contracts and money your priorities. Romance is encouraged. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* The tasks you agree to will change how you approach helping others. Don't take on more than you can handle. Be resourceful and search for ways to slash your overhead with a budget, discipline and strategy. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Take the high road, and look out for those who can't fend for themselves. You'll feel good and develop a friendship you can count on for your good deed. A unique experience will open your mind to a host of possibilities. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Don't wait for someone else to make the first move. Change begins with you, and being proactive will show your ability to get things done. Spend less time complaining or criticizing and more time doing something worthwhile. Walk away from temptation. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Go directly to the source and ask questions. A business trip, meeting or lecture will reveal the truth. Creative accounting will help you end the year in an excellent financial position. Spend only what's necessary and within your budget. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Gather information that will help you with your finances. Tips that show you how to reduce debt or talks that help establish who pays what with those you share expenses with will encourage better days ahead and peace of mind. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Back away from people pushing you to take on too much or indulge in something that is costly or might hurt your reputation. Use your power of persuasion to get help and clear up matters making your life difficult. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Search for an easy way to make your home more efficient and your overhead less expensive. If you do the work yourself, you'll save money and learn new skills that will benefit you. Avoid secret dealings that can hurt your reputation. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Consider what you can do, what you want to do and what's mandatory, then proceed. Carry on, regardless of whether others agree with you. Ramp up your enthusiasm and energy, and you'll dazzle anyone who questions how you choose to do things. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Your persuasive charm and colorful way of describing what you want from others will capture attention and encourage others to pitch in and help. Be sure to offer incentives to the promises you make. Stick to the truth to avoid backlash. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are demonstrative, original and generous. You are stubborn and proactive.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	2						9	
4			3		8			5
			5	9	4			
	4	2				6	3	
		8				5		
	9	6				7	4	
			9	4	1			
3			8		6			2
	8						7	

Difficulty Level ★★ 12/06

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

9	2	3	1	7	8	5	6	4
8	4	1	6	5	2	3	9	7
7	5	6	3	4	9	8	1	2
3	6	7	9	1	4	2	8	5
4	1	5	2	8	6	7	3	9
2	9	8	5	3	7	6	4	1
5	7	4	8	9	3	1	2	6
6	3	9	7	2	1	4	5	8
1	8	2	4	6	5	9	7	3

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

AUSTRALIAN ABALONE **Solution: 8 letters**

U	F	R	O	Z	E	N	M	U	I	R	A	U	Q	A
E	L	R	A	E	P	J	U	I	C	E	M	I	L	S
X	A	A	E	E	K	R	E	T	S	Y	O	G	N	N
P	V	S	R	S	T	O	O	M	T	S	A	O	C	E
E	O	Q	A	O	H	U	O	T	I	E	T	P	P	N
N	R	U	E	V	C	L	A	C	E	T	M	A	S	O
S	F	I	S	H	L	S	I	S	U	I	H	N	O	I
I	U	D	E	U	E	T	M	B	R	S	N	F	Y	T
V	L	W	S	P	C	O	C	H	R	A	S	R	S	A
E	Y	K	I	R	O	L	S	L	G	E	N	I	A	R
N	V	C	A	R	A	H	T	H	I	N	A	E	U	O
I	E	T	H	M	E	A	T	E	E	N	I	D	C	C
R	N	S	E	L	B	A	U	L	A	V	L	V	E	E
A	U	N	L	T	N	E	C	S	E	D	I	R	I	D
M	U	S	S	E	L	S	K	N	U	H	C	O	L	D

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Algae, Antarctic, Aquarium, Breaded, Buttons, Chewy, Chunks, Clam, Coast, Cold, Cook, Coral, Decoration, Dine, Diving, Expensive, Flavorful, Fresh, Frozen, Iridescent, Juice, Lime, Marine, Meat, Menu, Mollusk, Mushrooms, Mussels, Oyster, Pan-fried, Pearl, Protein, Recipes, Sauté, Sear, Shape, Shell, Shrimp, Snail, Soy Sauce, Squid, Thin, Valuable

Yesterday's Answer: Divisions

The NEW Wonderword Grand Millennium #1 in LARGE PRINT is now available at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

Burrow, Bengals beat Chiefs for 3rd straight time, 27-24

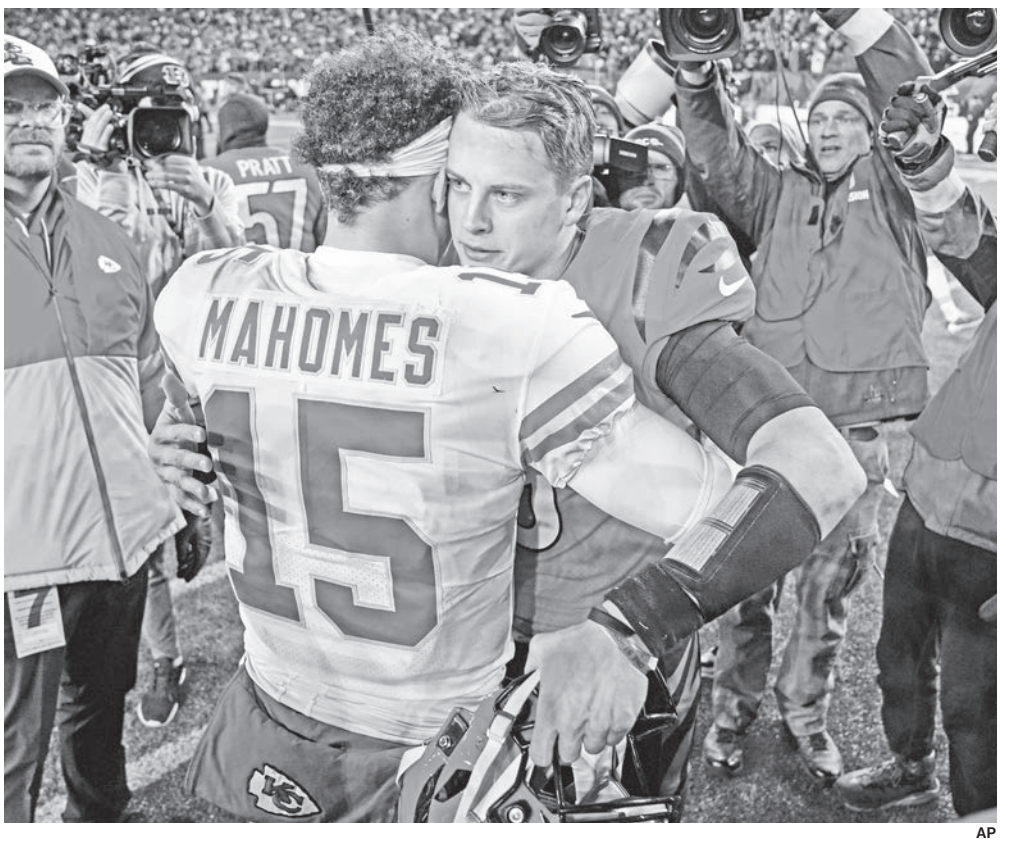
CINCINNATI (AP)—Joe Burrow threw two touchdown passes and ran for another score, Samaje Perine rushed for a season-high 106 yards and the Cincinnati Bengals beat the Kansas City Chiefs 27-24 on Sunday in their first meeting since the Bengals prevailed in last season's AFC championship game.

Patrick Mahomes and Chiefs lost their chance to avenge two losses to Burrow and Cincinnati last season. The Bengals beat the Chiefs last Jan. 2 to clinch the AFC North title, then won four weeks later in overtime to reach the Super Bowl for the first time in 33 years.

With the Chiefs leading 24-20, Cincinnati linebacker Germaine Pratt stripped Trave Kelce after a catch and recovered the fumble.

Burrow, working from his own 47, then completed six of seven passes for 53 yards, finishing the drive with an 8-yard TD pass to backup running back Chris Evans that gave the Bengals the lead with 8:54 remaining.

The subsequent Chiefs drive was snuffed out when Joseph Ossai sacked Mahomes, and Harrison Butker missed a 55-yard field-goal attempt wide right.



AP

Cincinnati Bengals quarterback Joe Burrow (9) meets with Kansas City Chiefs quarterback Patrick Mahomes (15) following an NFL football game in Cincinnati, Fla., Sunday, Dec. 4, 2022.

Cowboys 54, Colts 19

In Arlington, Texas, Malik Hooker returned a fumble 38 yards for a touchdown against his former team and Dallas scored 33 points in the fourth quarter to rout Indianapolis.

Dallas led 21-19 entering the fourth when Dak Prescott threw the last of his three touchdown passes. Hooker's scoop-and-score was the first of four fourth-quarter takeaways by Dallas, all of which led to touchdowns.

The highest-scoring quarter for the Cowboys (9-3) since at least 1991 was just the third time in NFL history a team scored as many as 33 points in the fourth.

Matt Ryan threw his second and third interceptions and lost a fumble during the nightmare finish for the Colts (4-8-1), who fell to 1-3 under interim coach Jeff Saturday and lost for the sixth time in seven games overall.

49ers 33, Dolphins 17

In Santa Clara, Calif., rookie Brock Purdy threw two touchdown passes after replacing Jimmy Garoppolo — who suffered a broken left foot that will end his season — and San Francisco used another dominant defensive performance to beat Miami for its fifth straight win.

The 49ers (8-4) allowed a 75-yard touchdown pass to Trent Sherfield on the opening play from scrimmage but little else until the fourth quarter against a high-powered attack for Miami (8-4) that had scored at least 30 points in four straight games.

Jimmie Ward and Deommodore Lenoir intercepted Tua Tagovailoa in the third quarter, leading to two field goals.

Tagovailoa threw a 45-yard TD pass to Tyreek Hill in the opening minute of the fourth quarter, but the Niners held on from there. They capped the performance with a strip-sack from Nick Bosa that Dre Greenlaw returned for a 23-yard score.

The Dolphins had their five-game winning streak snapped in coach Mike McDaniel's first game against the 49ers after spending the past five years as an assistant in San Francisco.

Garoppolo hurt his foot on a sack on the final play of the opening drive. Purdy capped his first drive of the game by throwing a 3-yard TD pass to Kyle Juszczyk to give San Francisco a 10-7 lead.

He then led a well-executed two-minute drive at the end of the half, completing six passes for 75 yards with a 3-yard TD to Christian McCaffrey with 4 seconds left in the half to make it 17-10.

Commanders 20, Giants 20, OT

In East Rutherford, N.J., Graham Gano came up well short on a 58-yard field goal attempt on the last play of overtime, and New York and Washington tied.

Taylor Heinicke threw two touchdown passes for Washington and converted a crucial fourth-down pass during a tying 90-yard touchdown drive late in the fourth quarter.

The Giants (7-4-1) ended a two-game losing streak, while the Commanders (7-5-1) are unbeaten in four (3-0-1) and have only one loss in their last eight games.

Ravens 10, Broncos 9

In Baltimore, Tyler Huntley capped a 91-yard drive with a 2-yard touchdown run with 28 seconds remaining, and Baltimore overcame Lamar Jackson's injury to beat Denver.

Jackson left after the first quarter with an injured knee, and the Broncos mostly shut down Baltimore after that. But on their final possession, the Ravens drove 16 plays, aided by a couple big Denver penalties. Huntley converted on fourth-and-2 from the Denver 18 with a short run, then Kenyan Drake caught a 13-yard pass.

Huntley scored on the next play for the Ravens (8-4), who stayed atop the AFC North.

Vikings 27, Jets 22

In Minneapolis, Justin Jefferson's touchdown catch with 8:33 left gave Minnesota enough of a lead to hang on despite a relentless rally by New York.

Camryn Bynum's interception at the 1-yard line with 10 seconds left finally sealed it for the Vikings (10-2), who completed a four-game sweep of the AFC East in their typical nail-biting fashion.

Mike White, who was picked off twice, was 31 of 57 for 369 yards in his second start this season for the Jets (7-5). He scored on a fourth-and-goal sneak from the 1 to pull within five points with 6:45 to go.

With 1:43 remaining, White's fourth-and-goal pass from the 1 was incomplete when Braxton Berrios bobbled it and the ball hit the turf. The Jets had all three timeouts left and got the ball back at the Minnesota 43, but with White under plenty of pressure they stalled out at the 19.

Browns 27, Texans 14

In Houston, Deshaun Watson had a sloppy performance in his first game in 700 days, but a punt return for a touchdown by Donovan Peoples-Jones and two defensive TDs were enough for Cleveland to beat lowly Houston.

In the same stadium where he played his previous game, a rusty Watson threw for 131 yards with an interception in his debut for the Browns (5-7) against his former team in his return after serving an 11-game NFL suspension for sexual misconduct allegations.

The Browns trailed 5-0 early but a 76-yard punt return by Peoples-Jones put them on top in the second quarter and Denzel Ward's 4-yard fumble return for a score pushed the lead to 14-5 early in the third quarter.

Cleveland didn't score on offense until a 43-yard field goal made it 17-8 with about 10 minutes remaining. The Browns added a second defensive score when Tony Fields intercepted Kyle Allen and returned it 16 yards on the next play. The Texans (1-10-1) lost their seventh straight.

Eagles 35, Titans 10

In Philadelphia, Jalen Hurts strengthened his MVP bid by throwing for 380 yards and three touchdowns and running for another score, and A.J Brown caught two touchdown passes against his former team as Philadelphia beat Tennessee.

Hurts has led the Eagles to an 11-1 start, their first time with that record since 2004 and the fourth time in franchise history. The 1949 Eagles won the NFL championship. The 1980 and 2004 teams lost in the Super Bowl.

Packers 28, Bears 19

In Chicago, Aaron Rodgers led three fourth-quarter scoring drives, receiver Christian Watson took an end-around 46 yards for a touchdown in the closing minutes, and Green Bay rallied to beat Chicago.

The Packers (5-8) looked like they were on their way to another loss after dropping seven of eight, trailing 19-10 through three quarters. But they made enough plays down the stretch to come away with their eighth straight win over the Bears (3-10), who lost their sixth straight.

AJ Dillon ran for a 21-yard touchdown in the opening minute of the fourth and Mason Crosby kicked a 32-yard field goal to give Green Bay a 20-19 lead with just under five minutes left.

The Bears drove to the Packers 33 before Jaire Alexander stepped in front of Justin Fields' pass intended for Equanimeous St. Brown and picked it off. Three plays later, Watson sprinted untouched to the end zone, and Rodgers completed a 2-point conversion pass to Mercedes Lewis. That made it 28-19 with 1:51 remaining.

Rodgers improved to 25-5 against Chicago counting the playoffs. The four-time MVP completed 18 of 31 passes for 182 yards and a touchdown.

Seahawks 27, Rams 23

In Inglewood, Calif., DK Metcalf caught an 8-yard touchdown pass from Geno Smith with 36 seconds to play, and Seattle overcame an inspired performance by Bobby Wagner to beat spiraling Los Angeles.

Smith passed for a career-high 367 yards and threw three TD passes for the Seahawks (7-5), who barely snapped their two-game skid with 438 yards of offense against a Rams defense missing Aaron Donald.

After Cam Akers' second TD run put the Rams up 23-20 with 2:56 to play, Smith patiently directed the winning 75-yard drive, hitting Marquise Goodwin for 17 yards one play before finding Metcalf between defenders in the end zone.

Tyler Lockett and Noah Fant caught early TD passes from Smith in the most prolific game of the quarterback's decade in the NFL. Metcalf had eight catches for 127 yards, and Lockett had nine receptions for a season-high 128 yards as the Seahawks sent defending Super Bowl champion Los Angeles (3-9) to its sixth straight defeat.

Raiders 27, Chargers 20

In Las Vegas, Derek Carr completed two long touchdown passes to Davante Adams in the third quarter to rally Las Vegas past Los Angeles.

Josh Jacobs rushed for 144 yards and a touchdown, and the Raiders (5-7) improved to 5-1 when he has 100 or more yards. Jacobs has 1,303 yards this season, the most in Raiders history through 12 games.

Las Vegas sacked Justin Herbert five times, won its third straight and split its season series with the Chargers (6-6).

Los Angeles led 10-0 in the second quarter but the Raiders dominated from there. Carr completed a 31-yarder to Adams early in the third quarter to give Las Vegas the lead for good at 17-13. Less than four minutes later, the duo hooked up on a 45-yard flea flicker for another score.

Lions 40, Jaguars 14

In Detroit, Jamaal Williams ran for his 14th touchdown this season and Detroit routed Jacksonville.

The Lions (5-7) scored on all five of their drives in the first half to take a 17-point lead, and then on their first three possessions of the second half to pull away.

The Jaguars (4-8) had a scare on the last play of the second quarter when quarterback Trevor Lawrence was sacked and grabbed his left knee, but their defense made his return moot.

Lawrence was taken out in the fourth quarter with his team trailing by 26 points. He finished 17 of 31 for 179 yards with a touchdown.

Steelers 19, Falcons 16

In Atlanta, Kenny Pickett tossed a 17-yard touchdown pass to Connor Heyward, Matthew Wright kicked four field goals and Pittsburgh held off Atlanta.

Coming off a Monday night victory at Indianapolis, the Steelers (5-7) won two straight games for the first time during what's been a tough rebuilding year.

The Falcons (5-8) had first-and goal from the Steelers 10 with a chance for a go-ahead touchdown. But a holding penalty on Parker Hesse wiped out Cordarrelle Patterson's apparent TD run around left end, and the Falcons wound up settling for Younghoe Koo's third field goal of the day from 28 yards with 5:27 remaining.

Davis scores 55, grabs 17 boards; Lakers top Wizards

WASHINGTON (AP)—Anthony Davis scored 55 points on sizzling 22 of 30 shooting and added 17 rebounds, leading the Los Angeles Lakers over the Washington Wizards 130-119 on Sunday night.

After scoring 44 points against Milwaukee in his previous game, Davis came close to his career-high of 59 against Detroit in 2016.

LeBron James had 29 points as the Lakers won their fourth straight road game. They are 8-2 in their last 10 games while trying to extricate themselves from a 2-10 start.

Washington lost leading scorer and three-time All-Star Bradley Beal to an undisclosed injury with 8:31 to play in the first quarter.

Wizards center Kristaps Porzingis shot 11 of 25 for 27 points. Former Laker Kyle Kuzma added 26 points for Washington before he fouled out.

Pelicans 121, Nuggets 106

In New Orleans, Jose Alvarado highlighted a crowd-stirring, career-high 38-point performance with a career-best eight 3-pointers to lead New Orleans over Denver for the Pelicans' fourth straight win.

Zion Williamson scored 25 points for the Pelicans. Jonas Valanciunas added 13 points despite being limited to less than 14 minutes by foul trouble. Willy Hernangomez, who played nearly 20 minutes in place of Valanciunas, responded with 12 points and eight rebounds.

Nikola Jokic had 32 points and 16 rebounds for the Nuggets, who've lost two straight on the heels of four straight victories.

Suns 133, Spurs 95

In San Antonio, Deandre Ayton had 25 points and 10 rebounds and Phoenix overwhelmed San Antonio, handing the Spurs their 11th straight loss.

San Antonio fell behind by 30 points in the second quarter and is now two losses shy of the franchise's worst skid set in 1989.

Devin Booker and Mikal Bridges each had 20 points as Phoenix won for the seventh time in eight games.

Keldon Johnson has 27 points for the Spurs, who have not won since Nov. 11.

Grizzlies 122, Pistons 112

In Detroit, Ja Morant scored 21 of his 33 points in the third quarter in Memphis' victory over Detroit.

Morant added 10 assists to help Memphis win for the fourth time in five games. Dillon Brooks and Jaren Jackson Jr. each scored 22 points and Brandon Clarke had 14 points and 14 rebounds.

Saddiq Bey led Detroit with 20 points and Bojan Bogdanovic had 18.

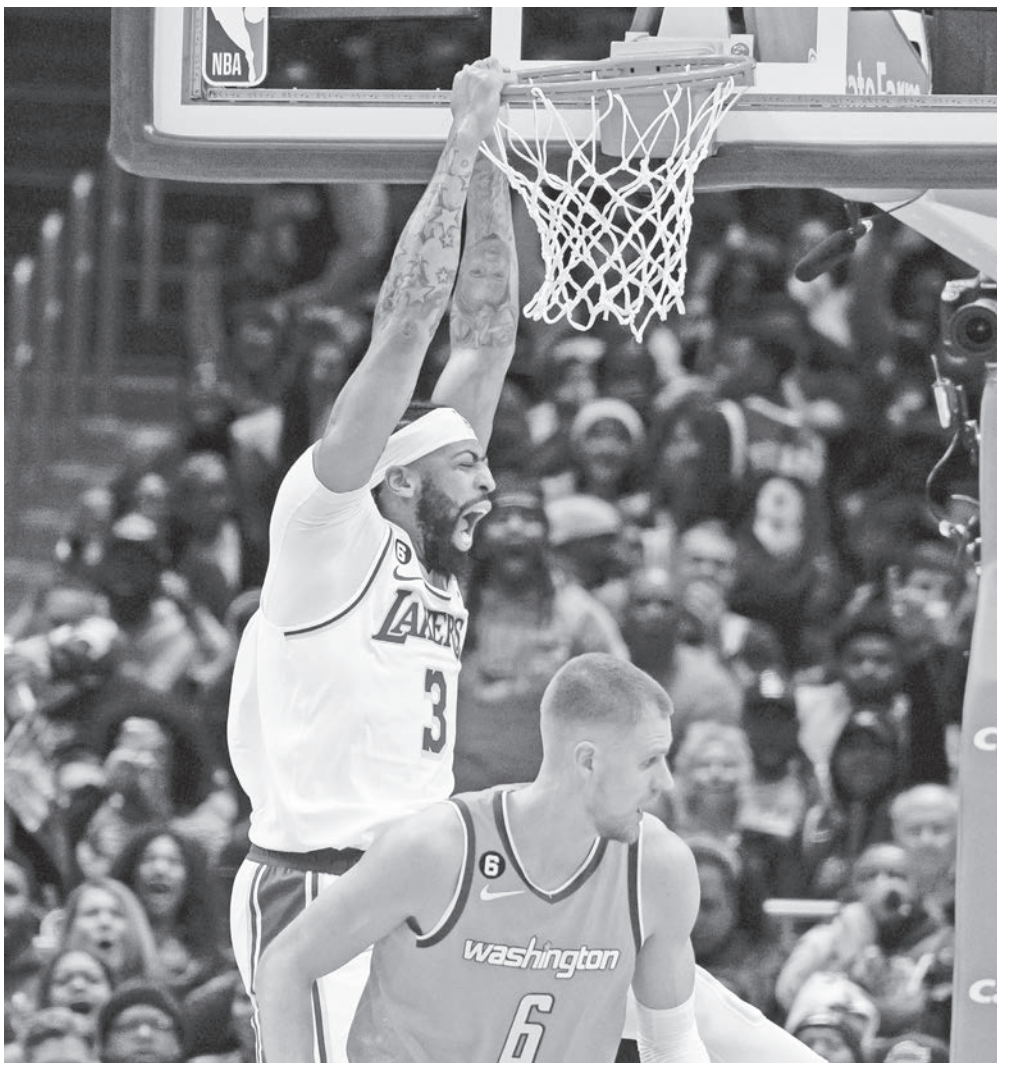
Kings 110, Bulls 101

In Sacramento, Calif., Malik Monk scored 20 points off the bench and Sacramento overcame Zach LaVine's 41 points to beat Chicago.

Domantas Sabonis had 11 points, 17 rebounds and 10 assists for the Kings.

Harrison Barnes had 17 points, Kevin Huerter added 12 and rookie Keegan Murray finished with 11. All five Kings starters scored in double figures.

Nikola Vucevic had 12 points and Patrick Williams finished with 10 for Chicago.



AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward Anthony Davis, left, dunks against Washington Wizards centers Daniel Gafford (21) and Kristaps Porzingis (6) during the second half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Dec. 4, 2022, in Washington.

Knicks 92, Cavaliers 81

In New York, Jalen Brunson scored 23 points and New York snapped a five-game home losing streak with a win over Cleveland.

The Knicks never trailed in the contest as they held an opponent under 100 points for the first time this season.

Julius Randle scored 18 points and RJ Barrett added 15 as New York held the Cavaliers to a season-low point total and field goal percentage of 34.9%.

Donovan Mitchell led Cleveland with 23 points and Darius Garland had 17.

Celtics 103, Nets 92

In New York, Jaylen Brown had 34 points and 10 rebounds, Jayson Tatum added 29 points and 11 boards and Boston snapped Brooklyn's four-game winning streak.

Kevin Durant scored 31 points for the Nets, but committed eight turnovers. Kyrie Irving added 18 points and eight rebounds but shot just 7 for 21 from the field.

The Celtics played without Defensive Player of the Year Marcus Smart because of a bruised left hip.

Trail Blazers 116, Pacers 100

In Portland, Ore., Jerami Grant scored 28 points in Portland's victory over Indiana.

Blazers star Damian Lillard scored 21 points and dished six assists in his first game since returning from a calf strain he suffered on Nov. 19. Anfernee Simons had 22 points and six assists on the night, while Jusuf Nurkic had 19 points and six rebounds.

Myles Turner led the Pacers with 24 points and nine rebounds. Buddy Hield had 22 points in support as the Pacers were without starting point guard Tyrese Haliburton.

KYLIAN

From Page 20

happy but that's not why I'm here. I'm here to win and I'm here to help the French national team."

Lewandowski, a two-time FIFA player of the year, scored from the penalty spot in second-half stoppage time for Poland.

France will play England for a spot in the semifinals. The English team beat Senegal 3-0.

Mbappé scored his first goal in the 74th minute when he was left unmarked to blast in a long-range shot following a counterattack. He added another in stoppage time when Poland goalkeeper Wojciech Szczęsny could only get a weak glove on another powerful shot from the man in the No. 10 shirt.

"He can change a match in just a moment and he's always playing with such joy and we all want to share those smiles with him," France coach Didier Deschamps said. "France needed a great Kylian Mbappé tonight and they got one."

Having also provided two assists, Mbappé has easily been the most productive player in Qatar.

After his latest exploits, Mbappé explained why he hadn't addressed the media in Qatar before Sunday.

"I needed to focus on the tournament and my soccer," he said through a translator, adding that he had volunteered to pay a French federation fine for his silence. "When I want to concentrate on something that's the way I function. And that's why I didn't want to come speak to you before now.

"I've been preparing for this tournament throughout the season, physically and mentally," he added. "I wanted to be ready for this tournament and I am."

Mbappé celebrated his second goal by waving his arms for the crowd to cheer louder. Then he hoisted himself up onto the crossbar shortly after the final whistle in front of France's celebrating fans.

Mbappé already has nine career World Cup goals and if he stays healthy, he could probably play in another three editions of soccer's biggest event — meaning he might approach the tournament's career scoring record held by Germany striker Miroslav Klose, who scored 16 goals over four World Cups.

"He hurt us today but I am cheering for him because he is a real star," Poland coach Czesław Michniewicz said through a translator. "I'm talking about (Lionel) Messi, (Cristiano) Ronaldo, Lewandowski. If someone is going to take over, I think Mbappé will be the player to be the best one (for) many years."

No country has repeated as World Cup champions in six decades — since Brazil achieved the feat by claiming consecutive trophies in 1958 and 1962. Italy is the only other nation to have won two straight, in 1934 and 1938.

While Lewandowski is a prolific scorer himself, he's never come close to winning a major title with a Poland team that struggles to get him the ball.

Mbappé, by contrast, is supported by a large array of talented players — even though half a dozen top France players are out injured.

The French team took the lead when Mbappé threaded a pass to Giroud and the AC Milan striker quickly slotted the ball into the far corner. It was Giroud's 52nd career international goal — breaking a tie with Thierry Henry on France's all-time scoring list.

After Mbappé leaped into Giroud's arms to celebrate, pumping his fists, Giroud held up seven fingers to the cameras — five on one hand and two on the other for "52."

It's all the more sweet for Giroud because he wasn't even supposed to be a starter on this year's squad until Ballon d'Or winner Karim Benzema was ruled out because of injury. Giroud also scored two goals in France's opening 4-1 win over Australia.

On a record-setting night for France, goalkeeper Hugo Lloris matched the national team mark of 142 appearances held by Lilian Thuram.

With two European teams playing, there weren't all that many supporters of either country inside Al Thumama Stadium except for small pockets of France fans beating drums behind one goal and red-and-white clad spectators chanting "Polska" behind the opposite goal. There were also plenty of empty seats.

Play was paused briefly in the first half when France defender Jules Kounde was told by a match official to remove two gold chains he was wearing.

France coach Didier Deschamps was asked if Kounde kept the chains on because they displayed a rainbow symbol.

"I don't know what was on his necklace," Deschamps said. "Jules is superstitious and he usually wears that necklace even in training."

England 3, Wales 0

In Al Khor, Qatar, Raheem Sterling has been ruled out of England's World Cup round of 16 match with Senegal because of a "family matter," the Football Association said Sunday.The forward started the Three Lions' opening two games in Group B, but was left out of the final match, a 3-0 win against Wales.The FA didn't provide more details about the reason for Sterling's absence when making the announcement 90 minutes before kickoff against Senegal at Al Bayt Stadium."Raheem Sterling is not available for selection for the Three Lions tonight as he is dealing with a family matter," the FA said on Twitter.England coach Gareth Southgate told ITV Sport that Sterling is "going to go away and deal with that matter and we'll have to take it from there really."Sterling scored in England's opening 6-2 win against Iran, but it was not clear if he would start against Senegal even if available.The FA announced on Wednesday that England defender Ben White returned home from Qatar because of personal reasons.

Southern United, Paire claim women's titles

LEIGH GASES.

Southern United Football Club is Intermediate Division A champion of the 2022 Dove Women's League. The team is seen here with the trophy at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

LEIGH GASES.

Paire Football Club is the Intermediate Division B champion of the 2022 Dove Women's League. The team is seen here with the trophy at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

The women of Southern United Football Club and Paire Football Club are the winners in their respective divisions of the 2022 Dove Women's League after the conclusion of the season last Nov. 18 and Nov. 20 at the NMI Soccer Training Center in Koblerville.

In the Intermediate A Division, Southern United defeated Paire FC 4-0 in their last game last Nov. 20, which sealed their record at 4 wins, 1 loss, and 1 draw.

Raenna Ramarui of Southern United broke the silence in the sixth minute for an early lead. Six minutes later, Paire still couldn't get a handle of the ball as Keisha Deleon Guerrero put Southern United up by 2.

Cassandra Camacho scored the third goal in the 22nd minute, while Ramarui scored her second goal and the team's last goal in the 37th minute, to claim the 4-0 win.

Angellyn Roligat, Erin Frink, Haidee Manibusan, Ierlyma Deleon Guerrero, Raina Avelino, and Kina Rangamar also make up the Southern United championship team.

In the Intermediate B division, Paire FC slipped past Kanoa FC, 1-0, last Nov. 18 to give them a final win-loss record of 4-1.

Megumi West scored the lone goal in the fifth minute.

Along with West in the team are Heather Brook, Elizabeth Culp, Marisol Ladino Potes, April Liske-Clark, Ali Nelson, Astrid Poole, Pam Walsh, Camia Sablan, and Rhonda Gross.

In the other result last Nov. 20, Shirley's FC defeated MPU FC, 1-0. On Nov. 18, MPU FC beat Shirley's FC, while Tan Holdings FC and Matansa FC ended the game on a scoreless draw.

In second place of Division A is Shirley's FC with a 4-1-1 win-draw-loss card, followed by Paire FC and MPU FC with 1-1-4 records each; second place in Division B is MPU FC with a 2-2-1 record, third place is Kanoa with a 2-2-1 record as well, followed by Matansa FC with a 2-1-2 card, Tan Holdings is next with a 1-3-1 card, and last is Shirley's FC with five losses.

DOWN

From Page 20

At this point in the fifth inning, Peleliu had already scored all their runs—11—and came up empty in the next three innings, allowing Tokahao to swoop the victory from their clutches.

Asahi 11, Man Amigos 9

Asahi managed to slip past Man Amigos in the last inning in a close 11-9 game.

Asahi's bats came alive in the last inning for a five-run inning, coming back from four scoreless ones.

Man Amigos laid to waste their three-run lead in the fourth inning and Manny Sablan's home run, as Asahi pitcher Dominic Hideo didn't allow them any more runs toward the end of the game.

Hagu La'mun 15, Redmen 5

In the last men's division game of the day, Hagu La'mun run-ruled the Ngaraard Redmen, 15-5.

From the get-go, Hagu La'mun rumbled through Redmen pitcher Joe Celis' pitches, scoring seven runs in the first inning. It was an entirely different story for Redmen batters as they couldn't connect with the ball as only two runs scored in the first couple of innings, then three in the fourth.

Hagu La'mun's onslaught of runs didn't stop, with three more runs in the next couple of innings, then five in the last inning. John Acosta had two RBIs while teammates Tim Wesley, Celis, Glen Camacho, Mitch Aaron, Rodney Camacho, and Henry Lizama had one each.

The women's division playoff results will be posted in the next edition of *Saipan Tribune*.

'Fossil' wins 2022 golf championship

Greg "Fossil" Koebel shot a 75 at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort west golf course in windy conditions on Saturday to become the Ye Olde Saipanne Golfe Clubbe's 2022 Champion Golfer of the Year.

By employing his trusty decades-old sasquatche driver to keep his balls in the fairway and sinking a plethora of short- to mid-range putts, Koebel was able to hold off Juan "Juj" Lizama, who tragically missed a few tap-ins to finish one stroke back at 76.

Tim "Tex" Brasuell started slowly, ballooning to a 42 on the front nine, but despite his lovely backside score of 36, it was too little, too late for The Man From Dinttin.

Rounding out the Top 5 were last year's champion Bill "Supersandy" Riggen, who shot 80, and 2019 champion "Double" Dan Harding with an 81.

After the round, an awards ceremony was held at Wild Bill's Bar and Grill where Koebel was presented with the perpetual claret jug and fitted with the champion's jacket by Riggen.

Following the presentation, the club's members enjoyed copious refreshments as provided by the Wild Bill's staff and regaled each other with fascinating stories revolving mostly around the theme of how they would have won the championship if they hadn't "had such horribly bad luck on that one hole." ***(PR)***

CONTRIBUETD PHOTO

Greg "Fossil" Koebel shows off the claret jug, his cash prize, and yellow jacket after being named Ye Olde Saipanne Golfe Clubbe's 2022 Champion Golfer of the Year last Saturday during the awards ceremony at Wild Bill's.

Z BRINGS

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vous and tried to just focus on my game."

Jin said weather conditions also didn't give her much leeway as she literally didn't only had to fend off the tough ladies field, but the unpredictable wind conditions as well.

"To be honest the course wasn't very good. As you can feel right now the wind was really, really bad. Like the direction was changing every single time. It kind of confused me a little so that was kind of difficult," she said.

Jin added that she's happy to be joining golf tournaments again after a brief hiatus following the Mini Games to concentrace on her studies.

"First of all, I haven't been joining tournaments recently. I also love golf and I love McDonald's. I want to thank coach (Joe 'Kamikaze' Camacho), my parents, and my family for all their support," she said.

Jin pocketed $500 for winning first place in the ladies flight, while CNMI national women's coach Yuko Togawa shot a 79 to finish second and won $300. Me Ae Jeon completed the Top 3 with her 82 and collected $200.

In the C flight, Augustine Palacios' 85 was good enough for first place. Justin Terlaje was second after firing an 86, while Patrick George took third with his 88.

Federico Flores was numero uno in the seniors flight with his 77 and he was followed by Jeong Hoon Park and Joseph Sasamoto who came away with scores of 78 and 80, respectively.

Like in the ladies flight, Top 3 winners in the C flight and senior flight took home cash prizes of $500, $300, and $200 in the order of how they placed.

McDonald's Guam and Saipan co-owner Marcia Auyuy thanked the following sponsors for their support of the 2nd Annual McDonald's Golf Classic: Atkins Kroll, Triple J Motors, Joeten Motors, Stay Well Insurance, *Pacific Daily News*, MarPac Inc., Bank of Guam, KSPN2, Coca-Cola Beverage Company in CNMI, Bank of Saipan, ASC Trust, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, Bank of Hawaii, Matson Navigation, United Airlines, Bridge Capital LLC, Mobil Oil Marianas, Power 99, Micronesia Air Cargo Services, Guahan Waste Control, IT&E, Docomo Pacific, Herman's Bakery, Chong's Corp., RNV Construction, Saipan Computer Services, Westco, Sanford Technology Group, Megabyte, *Marianas Variety,* and Yaong Corp.

Burrow, Bengals beat Chiefs for 3rd straight time, 27-24

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Southern United, Paire claim women's titles

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Down to Final Four in men's division

By LEIGH GASES
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CORRESPONDENT

Sufa, Tokahao, Asahi, and Hagu La'mun were on fire and kept the runs coming to secure their spot in the semifinals of the 2022 Budweiser Belau Softball Association League in another searing hot Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

In the first men's game of the day, Sufa bested Momma Charu, 10-6; then, Tokahao rallied against Peleliu, 16-11; Asahi slipped past Man Amigos, 11-9; and Hagu La'mun run-ruled Ngaraard Redmen, 15-5.

The semifinals are this Sunday, Dec. 11, with a showdown between Sufa and Asahi and with a game between Tokahao and La'mun Hagu right after. The winners of those games will face off in the finals on Dec. 18.

Sufa 10, Momma Charu 6

Sufa's Audie Maratita almost completed the cycle as he led his team once again to victory, 10-6, over Momma Charu and is the first team to make it into the semifinals.

Maratita went 3-for-4 at bat in which he scored a home run, hit a triple and a double, and collected two RBIs.

However, until the fourth inning, Momma Charu was in the lead by one run after back-to-back-to-back runs scored in the second inning by Oscar Sablan, Ben Kileleman, and Ezekiel Fitial, for a 5-4 lead.

Then, in the fourth inning, Sufa pitcher Tom Camacho said no more to Momma Charu's lineup as he shut them down in the next three innings, allowing only one run. Meanwhile, his offense backed him up with runs to take the lead and the win, kicking out Momma Charu from the race for the championships.

In the end, Ben Mesa, Mike Cruz, and Camacho himself had one RBI each.

LEIGH GASES
Sufa's Paul Salalila went 2-for-4 at bat in their game against Momma Charu in the men's division of the 2022 Budweiser Belau Softball Association League last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

Tokahao 16, Peleliu 11

Tokahao rallied against Peleliu to win, 16-11, nudging last year's defending champs out of the race.

The game started off in favor of Peleliu as they scored consecutive runs—three in the first and three in the second with one home run made by Joe Lizama. But the tide changed in the third inning as Tokahao finally made contact with the ball.

Tokahao's Manny Villagomez started off their rally with a three-run home run at the top of the third inning, which avalanched into more runs in the next innings. Teammate Robert Bansil scored two home runs himself in the sixth and seventh, bringing in five RBIs.

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Kylian Mbappé leads France past Poland 3-1 at World Cup

By ANDREW DAMPF
AP SPORTS WRITER

DOHA, Qatar (AP)—It all seems so straightforward—laughable, perhaps—for Kylian Mbappé when it comes to the World Cup.

The France forward, who scored four goals when he led his country to the title four years ago as a 19-year-old phenom, put on yet another demonstration of how devastating he can be on the soccer field.

After it was over, Mbappé almost seemed to be chuckling as Robert Lewandowski came over to congratulate him.

Mbappé scored two goals Sunday and set up another for Olivier Giroud to give France a 3-1 victory over Poland and move the 2018 champions within three wins of successfully defending their title. He already has a tournament-best five goals in Qatar as Les Bleus have reached the quarterfinals for the third straight World Cup.

"The only objective for me is to win the World Cup," Mbappé said. "The only thing I dream is this. I came here to win this World Cup. I didn't come here to win the Golden Ball or Golden Boot. If I win it of course I'm going to be

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AP
France's Olivier Giroud celebrates after scoring the opening goal during the World Cup round of 16 soccer match between France and Poland, at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha, Qatar, Sunday, Dec. 4, 2022.

Z brings A game in Mickey D's golf tourney

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Northern Marianas Pacific Mini Games 2022 gold medalist Zhimin Jin won the ladies flight after firing the lowest score in the 2nd Annual McDonald's Golf Classic last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort.

The 15-year-old Marianas High School student's two-over par 74 even bested championship flight winner Sun Ho Kang's 75, which he shared with two other par-busters.

MARK RABAGO
Zhimin Jin, third from left, accepts his $500 check for winning the ladies flight of the 2nd Annual McDonald's Golf Classic last Saturday at the Laolao Bay Golf & Resort. Also in photo are, from left, Mabel Glenn, McDonald's Guam Saipan co-owner Marcia Ayuyu, and Jose Ayuyu Jr.

Jin said her best hole in the fundraiser for the Jose and Ruri Ayuyu Foundation, Inc., Make-A-Wish Foundation, Karidat Social Services, Ronald McDonald House, and the Salvation Army was the par-3 No. 4 hole, which she birdied.

Asked what her strategy was going into the tourney, the teenage golf sensation said it was overcoming mental challenges more than anything else.

"I just tried to focus on my game today because you know how I'm always paired up with the best players on Saipan so I tried not to get ner-

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